

# Northeastern University Physician Assistant Program

## Workload Policy

### **1. Rationale:**

The Physician Assistant program is a rigorous, 103 unit degree that requires approximately 40 hours of didactic lectures, activities, and lab per week in the first year. Additionally, many activities and labs require individualized teaching of small groups of students by all program faculty, increasing the number of student contact hours even further. As semester hours significantly underestimate the actual teaching hours in the didactic year, the program faculty workload policy is oriented around teaching hours and not semester hours.

For the second year, students are placed in numerous local and national clinical sites. These sites require continuous monitoring for safety, quality of clinical education, and adequate exposure to ARC-PA required patient populations. Oversight of the second year clinical placements is the purview of the Program Director and the Director of Clinical Education with part-time oversight by two additional faculty. Site visits that ensure the necessary quality of a clinical experience are conducted by all faculty.

Workload is defined by the program as all activities and/or responsibilities expected of full-time faculty to support the current program goals and running of the program. The current program goals are:

- 1) Attract individuals from diverse backgrounds to the Physician Assistant Program.
- 2) Graduate competent medical practitioners who are in high-demand by employers.
- 3) Prepare students to become effective members of a healthcare team
- 4) Prepare students to become leaders in the healthcare community

## **2. PA Program Faculty Workload Policy:**

All faculty in the Physician Assistant Program are Clinical Faculty appointments. Clinical Faculty are expected to complete duties relating to teaching, scholarship, and service as detailed below:

### **2.1 Teaching:**

All full-time faculty are expected to teach an average of no less than 9 hours per week in the Fall, Spring, and Summer semesters. This is the equivalent of three graduate courses per semester. Teaching is defined as student instruction, support, and/or contact that is conducted in the course of delivering the Physician Assistant curriculum. Instruction may be in a number of different formats, including (but not limited to): lecture, small groups, workshops, labs, practicums, precepting, evaluating/teaching students in the clinical environment and/or facilitating instruction at clinical sites. Faculty with significant administrative responsibilities may be permitted to exchange some teaching responsibilities for administrative time at the discretion of the Program Director. In addition to teaching requirements, all full-time faculty are required to serve as student advisors, oversee and grade capstone projects, conduct admissions interviews, and serve on all relevant program, college, and university committees (See 2.3 Service below).

All full-time faculty are expected to work 35 hours per week unless otherwise indicated in their contract.

### **2.2 Scholarship:**

Faculty are also expected to engage in scholarship. Scholarship is defined broadly and involves any creative endeavor which serves to advance the profession, university, or program at the regional, national, or international level. All forms of scholarship must be visible, disseminated to professional audiences, and validated by peers. Examples include (but are not limited to):

1. original research
2. book chapters
3. designing simulations
4. presentations

### **2.3 Service:**

Service is defined broadly as any activity which supports the profession, program, college, or university. Examples include (but are not limited to):

1. clinical work
2. service on program, college, and/or university committees
3. service on relevant regional, national and/or international committees
4. boards or societies

While valued by the program and College, professional and community service may not take the place of service that is needed to the department, College, and University.

The percentages of time dedicated to teaching, service, and scholarship for each full-time faculty member are:

**Teaching:** 70%

**Scholarship:** 10%

**Service:** 20%

Workloads are assigned by the Program Director. Deviations from the above percentages may be made on a case-by-case basis as determined by the faculty member and the Program Director at the beginning of each academic year in accordance with the needs of the Program. The percentages of time dedicated by each full-time member of the Program faculty are subsequently made available to all faculty and staff on SharePoint.

### **3. Reductions in Workload:**

Reductions in workload are permitted for any University approved leave, including: family leave, maternity leave, and sick leave. Additionally, faculty who secure external funding may negotiate a reduction in their teaching. To obtain a course reduction, faculty must use external funding to buy out of teaching in a manner described in the College Externally-funded Research Support Policy. Research "buy out" is limited to no more than three courses per academic year, and all tenured/tenure-track and clinical/non-tenure track faculty must teach a minimum of one course per academic year.

- 1) The following activities ***do not*** reduce a faculty member's teaching load, except in extraordinary circumstances, at the discretion of the department chair or dean:
  - a. Teaching a new course
  - b. Preparing a new course
  - c. Employing innovative teaching methods
  - d. Directed or independent study supervision
  - e. Mentoring or advising students
  - f. Directing or supervising students' honors theses or capstone projects.
  - g. Supervising students' independent or mentored research projects.

Dissertation service.

### **4. Review of Workload Policy:**

Review of the PA Program Workload Policy will be conducted annually.

### **5. Process for faculty to address workload concerns:**

Concerns regarding a faculty member's workload assignments can be initiated by any full-time faculty member at any time. The process includes submitting a letter of describing the

concerns to the Program Director. The Program Director may choose to act on these concerns. A faculty member may further bring their concerns to the College Dean. The decision of the College Dean on workload assignments is final.

**6. Accessibility of Policy:**

The current PA Program workload policy as well as the current percentages of time dedicated to teaching, scholarship, and service for each faculty member is available on the PA Program SharePoint site in the folder entitled "PA Program Workload Policy."

Date Approved by Program Faculty: 12/13/2017

Date Approved by Dean: 12/21/2017

Date Sent to Provost: 7/5/2018

Approved by the Faculty Senate on 4-5-17 (29 0 0) to be located on the Senate website upon BOT approval of the module entitled *Faculty Workloads*

### Checklist for Unit Workload Policy Documents

Each unit's chairperson and/or dean should initial each point on the checklist. By doing so, he or she attests that the full time faculty workload policy document satisfies each of these requirements.

- JH Document is consistent with published College and University policies.
- JH Document clearly reflects the goals/aspirations of the unit as these relate to workload.
- JH Document clearly defines the types of activities that constitute each of teaching, research/scholarship/creative activities/professional development, and service for the unit.
- JH Document describes the different types of full-time positions in the unit.
- JH Document clearly defines the teaching, research/scholarship/creative activities/professional development, and service expectations for the different types of appointments.
- JH Document describes all unit policies related to workload for full time faculty.
- JH Document describes criteria in which workloads may be modified, including pre-tenured minimum course reductions, family leaves, maternity/adoption leaves, and medical leaves.
- JH Document states how frequently the workload policy document will be reviewed.
- JH Document indicates where and how the unit's current workload policy document can be found.
- JH Document indicates where and how the workload assignments for each full time faculty member can be found.
- JH Document describes the process for faculty to address any concerns with their workload in the unit.
- JH Document indicates date of approval, any subsequent modifications by the unit, and anticipated date of next review.
- JH Document indicates date of approval of the unit's dean.
- JH Document indicates when it was sent to the Provost's Office to be included in the master list of policies for all units, and date of approval of the provost.

If the unit has one or more faculty with joint appointments in other units:

- JH Document defines how the workload policy changes for faculty members with an appointment of less than 100% in the unit, include impact of tenure home.
- JH Document describes how the unit will coordinate workload policy decisions with other units for faculty members with joint appointments, and how differences in workload expectations across units will be handled.