

**Northeastern University, College of Science
Department of Biology Full-time Faculty Workload Policy**

Annual workload for all full-time Biology faculty members is intended to collectively reflect the goals and aspirations of the Department of Biology, and to ensure alignment of Department activities with the overall mission and goals of the College of Science and of the University. To this end, dedicated efforts to promote both a deep understanding of biological principles, as well as innovative advances in the biomedical and life sciences, are essential for addressing major challenges that our world faces in health, security and sustainability. As a Department, we are therefore dedicated to:

- Creating knowledge that advances the fundamental understanding of diverse disciplines in the biological sciences and that addresses critical societal needs.
- Building the scientific and technical skillsets of students at all levels, with an emphasis on equipping them to excel in rapidly changing, competitive environments.
- Delivering rigorous undergraduate programs that constantly evolve to reflect current scientific knowledge and workforce needs, and that seamlessly integrate experiential learning through on-campus and cooperative education opportunities.
- Offering nationally recognized graduate programs that foster leadership in research, education, and service through challenging coursework, closely mentored scientific discovery, and expansion of interdisciplinary knowledge.

Annual workload for each full-time faculty member will be allocated into a total of six individual units of professional time devoted to specific activities and performance expectations in teaching and education (collectively referred to hereafter as “teaching”), research, scholarship and creative activities (collectively referred to hereafter as “research”), and service and community outreach (collectively referred to hereafter as “service”).

It is recognized that the scope of activities performed within the six units of professional time for each full-time faculty member will differ between non-tenure track (NTT) and tenured/tenure-track (T/TT) faculty, primarily based on the number of units representing time devoted to research for T/TT faculty.

The Department Executive Committee will review each faculty member’s workload annually, in conjunction with the Department annual workload performance review process (Annual Report). Each faculty member is encouraged to highlight in her/his Annual Report specific aspects of her/his activities or performance in teaching, research and/or service that she/he feels are critical to assessment of that faculty member’s workload assignment. The Department Executive Committee will consider, for example, overall class size (total enrollments) and course level (including undergraduate- versus graduate-level

teaching) in addition to other key metrics covered in the Department Annual Report form. Temporary adjustments to workload for a given faculty member may occur in accordance with University and Faculty Handbook Policies on sabbaticals, leaves of absences, and parental teaching relief.

Any recommended adjustments in workload for a faculty member will be presented to that faculty member prior to implementation electronically or through a meeting with the Department Executive Committee. If a faculty member disagrees with the workload recommendations made by the Department Executive Committee, that faculty member has the option to file an appeal for consideration by the Department Merit Evaluation and Workload Appeals Committee, who will render a decision on workload for that faculty member after discussion with the Department Chair. The outcome of this appeal does not preclude the faculty member taking additional steps as defined in the Faculty Handbook.

For the purposes of assessing workload performance each year, the Department will follow the definitions and metrics for assessment of teaching, research and service as outlined in the Department Annual Report form for full-time faculty and in the College of Science (COS) Criteria for Mid-Course (third-year) Review, Tenure and Promotion document.

In addition to specific service responsibilities on committees and the like, all full-time T/TT faculty members are expected to attend and actively participate in all monthly Department faculty meetings (note: if a faculty meeting conflicts with teaching obligations, an exception can be granted following written notification to the Department Chair). All tenured faculty are expected to attend and participate in all Department Tenure & Promotion Committee review meetings when called; and, all tenured Full Professors are expected to attend and participate in all Full Professor Committee review meetings when called. All faculty members are also expected to participate in various self-studies and reviews of the Department that are initiated at the Department, College or University level. In addition, all T/TT faculty members are expected to participate in all other Department activities, including faculty searches, colloquia, graduate student recruitment events and defenses, undergraduate student poster presentations, and the like. These efforts are critical to building and sustaining the Department in all areas of activity, and represent the basic expectation for service for all T/TT faculty members (one unit of six total). All NTT faculty members are encouraged to attend and actively participate in all monthly Department faculty meetings and, to the extent appropriate, in other Department activities.

The Department Executive Committee will review the Department of Biology Full-time Faculty Workload Policy annually¹, and the current version will be distributed annually (via electronic format) to all full-time faculty members at the start of each academic year. Each full-time faculty member can, at any time, obtain a current list of workload assignments by request in writing from the Department Chair. The policy document will also be made freely available to any faculty member by written request through the Department of Biology Main Administrative Office. A current copy of the Department of Biology Full-time Faculty Workload Policy will also be provided to the Dean of the College of Science and to the Office of the Provost at the start of each new academic year.

Specific details regarding full-time Biology faculty workload structure are as follows:

NTT faculty:

Six units of teaching (one 4-SH course or equivalent = one unit; six-course teaching load per academic year); however, depending on Department, College or University needs or priorities, the basic workload structure for Teaching Professors can be modified to replace one or more units of teaching with other major professional activities related to service, teaching and/or research².

T/TT faculty:

The overall structure for each tenured faculty member's workload expectation will be determined in large part by the extent of research conducted by that faculty member. All TT faculty members will, with rare exception, have a defined workload structure for their entire pre-tenure period³.

Since the extent of professional time devoted to research can, and often does, change with fluctuations in success rates of obtaining and maintaining outside research funding, the workload structure for each tenured faculty member with an active research laboratory will be reviewed each year as a renewing four-year projection of expected workload⁴. This will provide an appropriate transitional buffer of time between potential changes in workload structure (see example workload Structures below) should a tenured faculty member lose external funding and not be able to regain it, with fully documented good faith efforts to do so. If funding is not obtained four years after losing it, the fifth year will activate transition to a new workload structure for that faculty member (shift from workload Structure 1 to Structure 2, Structure 2 to Structure 3, or Structure 1 to Structure 3) reflecting the diminished number of units of professional time devoted to research.

The basic expectation for all T/TT faculty members is that each faculty member will devote at minimum one unit of professional time to service and at minimum two units of professional time to teaching (two courses per year)⁵, leaving three units of professional time that will be allocated across research, service and/or teaching based on the overall level of research activity. The three most likely examples of T/TT faculty workload structures are as follows:

Structure 1: the faculty member has an active research laboratory (or active computational research space, if a computational biologist) and holds one major outside research award (*e.g.*, NSF, NIH, U.S. Army/Department of Defense, HHMI Investigator Award, Corporate-sponsored Research Award, Major Foundation Award, etc.) as Principal Investigator plus at least one additional major outside award as either Principal Investigator or Co-Principal Investigator

- One unit of service (basic expectation)
- Two units of teaching (basic expectation)
- Three units of research

Structure 2: the faculty member has an active research laboratory (or active computational research space, if a computational biologist) and holds one major outside research award (*e.g.*, NSF, NIH, U.S. Army/Department of Defense, HHMI Investigator Award, Corporate-sponsored Research Award, Major Foundation Award, etc.) as Principal Investigator or Co-Principal Investigator with no additional major outside awards as either Principal Investigator or Co-Principal Investigator

One unit of service (basic expectation)

Two units of teaching (basic expectation)

Two units of research

One remaining unit of professional time allocated to either teaching one additional course per academic year, or to a major service, educational or research activity⁶

Structure 3: the faculty member does not have an active research laboratory⁷

One unit of service (basic expectation)

Two units of teaching (basic expectation)

Three remaining units of professional time allocated to either teaching one or more additional course(s) per academic year, and/or to major service, educational or research activities such that three total units are achieved⁶

NTT Faculty in Shared Departmental Programs:

For NTT faculty appointed in shared Departmental programs (*e.g.*, Biochemistry, Behavioral Neuroscience), annual workload structure will be determined by the Program Director in conjunction with input from the Chairs of the departments that share that program (*e.g.*, Biochemistry: Chairs of the Biology and the Chemistry & Chemical Biology Departments; Behavioral Neuroscience: Chairs of the Biology and the Psychology Departments). Annual workload structure for Program Directors, who are appointed by the Dean of the College of Science, will be determined by the Chairs of the departments that share that program.

T/TT Faculty with Joint Appointments:

T/TT Faculty with their Tenure Home in the Department of Biology: the workload policy of the Department of Biology will serve as the guiding mechanism to assess and assign workload. Annual evaluations of workload performance and potential adjustments in workload will be performed by the Department of Biology in conjunction with the Chair of the other academic department(s) or unit(s) in which the faculty member holds a joint (non-tenure-home) appointment(s). The percentage of appointment in the Department of Biology and the non-tenure-home department(s) or unit(s) will be considered in final determinations of annual teaching and service expectations. In some cases, teaching and/or service activity may be rotated each academic year or every other academic year to ensure that the faculty member's professional activities support the overall goals of each appointing department or unit in proportion to their appointment percentages.

T/TT Faculty with their Tenure Home in Another Academic Department or Unit: the workload policy of the non-tenure-home department will serve as the guiding mechanism

to assess and assign workload. Annual evaluations of workload performance and potential adjustments in workload will be performed by the tenure-home department or unit in conjunction with the Chair of the Department of Biology (in consultation with the Department Executive Committee). The percentage of appointment in the tenure-home department or unit and the Department of Biology will be considered in final determinations of annual teaching and service expectations. In some cases, teaching and/or service activity may be rotated each academic year or every other academic year to ensure that the faculty member's professional activities support the overall goals of each appointing department or unit in proportion to their appointment percentages.

Footnotes:

¹Should the Department Executive Committee, during its annual review of the Department of Biology Full-time Faculty Workload Policy, deem that a modification(s) is needed to the policy, the modification(s) will be brought forth for full discussion and vote at the next monthly Department faculty meeting; if the motion is approved by majority vote, the modification will be added to the policy, and the revised policy will be forwarded to the Dean of the College of Science and the Office of the Provost for consideration. If approved by the Dean and the Provost, the modification will be added to the policy with the date of modification, and the updated policy will then be electronically distributed to all Biology faculty members, the Dean of the College of Science, and the Office of the Provost.

²Exceptions to the basic workload structures for NTT Faculty (Teaching Professors) may be granted should a NTT faculty member demonstrate additional major activities related to service, research and/or the teaching mission of the University which are deemed important and necessary by the Department Executive Committee; however, such exceptions will require review and approval of the justification for an exception by the Department Chair; if appropriate, such decisions may also involve consultation of the Department Chair with the Dean of the College of Science. It is recognized that such activities can result in an accumulation of performance points based on the current Department Annual Report metrics for these activities that fall outside of standard teaching workload expectations. The Department Executive Committee will weigh these efforts yearly (performance points for NTT faculty outside of annual teaching expectations can be accumulated over a maximum five-year period), which may result in a one-time one-unit reduction in teaching workload during the next academic year.

³Workload structure for all TT faculty members will, with rare exception, be defined as one unit of service, two units of teaching and three units of research until completion of their tenure and promotion review (see workload Structure 1); TT faculty members may also be granted single course releases (of two total per academic year) for each of their first two years of appointment as part of their recruitment package.

⁴In the case that a tenured faculty member with a workload shown in Structure 2 increases their level of major outside funding by obtaining a second (or more) outside awards as Principal Investigator or Co-Principal Investigator, a shift in workload to Structure 1 (one

unit reduction in teaching or service) will occur at the start of the next academic year following receipt of formal award notification from the funding agency; the annual review/renewing four-year projection will then begin at that time under the new workload structure. In the very rare case that a tenured faculty member who does not have an active research laboratory (see workload Structure 3) obtains a major outside research award as Principal Investigator, the Department Chair and the College Dean will work in conjunction with the Office the Provost to identify potential new research laboratory space for that faculty member to enable pursuit of the studies proposed in the award. Corresponding adjustments will be made to workload distribution in the next academic year (*e.g.*, shift from workload Structure 3 to Structure 2) following receipt of formal award notification from the funding agency; the annual review/renewing four-year projection will then begin at that time under the new workload structure.

⁵All tenured faculty members have the option to “buy out” of teaching one course per academic year; however, all tenured faculty members must still teach at least one course per academic year if she/he chooses to do the buy-out option.

⁶Examples of major professional activities that would be weighed by the Department Executive Committee in considering a reduction in annual teaching workload include:

- Service as Department Associate Chair
- Service as Department Graduate Program Coordinator
- Service as Department Director of Undergraduate Studies
- Service as Director of a major Department academic program (*e.g.*, Biochemistry, Behavioral Neuroscience)
- Service as Director of the University Pre-Health Program
- Principal Investigator or Co-Principal Investigator on a major external educational or teaching award (*e.g.*, NSF-REU, HHMI, NIH, etc.)

⁷It is recognized that for tenured faculty members without active research laboratories (see workload Structure 3), many opportunities exist to maintain scholarship and creative pursuits. All tenured faculty members with workload Structure 3 are strongly encouraged to remain engaged in the wide breadth of scholarly activities that contribute to the overall mission of the Department, the College of Science and the University. Therefore, research and scholarship activities that result in an accumulation of a pre-determined target number of performance points based on the current Department Annual Report metrics for these activities (see details below) will result in a one-time one-unit reduction in teaching or service workload during the next academic year after the target point total is reached. Points can be accumulated over a maximum three-year period to reach the target point total needed for a one-time one-unit reduction in teaching or service workload.

- The scope of activities from which points can be derived and accumulated are outlined in the “Scholarship” section of the Department Annual Report form.
- The target point total will be determined by the Department Executive Committee, and will reflect the median number of points accrued by all tenured Biology faculty members with active research laboratories to achieve one unit of research activity.

- Since tenured faculty members with active research laboratories fall under one of two workload structures depending on level of external funding (workload Structures 1 and 2), the calculation of the target point total will be as follows: median scholarship point total per year (from all tenured faculty members with active research laboratories) over the three most recent years divided by 2.5 (note: total annual scholarship points yield either 2-units or 3-units of time allocated to research activity under workload Structure 2 or Structure 3, respectively; therefore, one unit of research activity will equal the median total scholarship points per year divided by 2.5).

Attachments:

- Department of Biology Annual Report for Full-time Faculty
- COS Criteria for Mid-Course (third-year) Review, Tenure and Promotion

Approvals:

Department of Biology: January 18, 2018

Dean, College of Science: January 29, 2018

Sent to Provost: January 29, 2018

Provost Approval: May 15, 2018

Date of next review: September 2019

Checklist for Unit Workload Policy Documents
College of Science, Department of Biology

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.

FCD

Document is consistent with published College and University policies.

FCD

Document clearly reflects the goals/aspirations of the unit as these relate to workload.

FCD

Document clearly defines the types of activities that constitute each of teaching, research/scholarship/creative activities/professional development, and service for the unit.

FCD

Document describes the different types of full-time positions in the unit.

FCD

Document clearly defines the teaching, research/scholarship/creative activities/professional development, and service expectations for the different types of appointments.

FCD

Document describes all unit policies related to workload for full time faculty.

FCD

Document describes criteria in which workloads may be modified, including pre-tenured minimum course reductions, family leaves, maternity/adoption leaves, and medical leaves.

FCD

Document states how frequently the workload policy document will be reviewed.

FCD

Document indicates where and how the unit's current workload policy document can be found.

FCD

Document indicates where and how the workload assignments for each full time faculty member can be found.

FCD

Document describes the process for faculty to address any concerns with their workload in the unit.

FCD

Document indicates date of approval, any subsequent modifications by the unit, and anticipated date of next review.

FCD

Document indicates date of approval of the unit's dean.

FCD

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.

FCD

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

FCD

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.

FCD

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.