Northeastern University School of Law Workload Policy
March 2018

Section 1. Workload assignments to serve the goals and aspirations of the School of Law

This policy describes guidelines for the allocation of workload among full-time faculty members at Northeastern University School of Law, in accordance with the Faculty Senate Workload Policy Directive adopted 4/5/17 and the Workload Distribution Guidelines issued by the Office of the Provost, updated 9/13/17.

The mission of the School of Law is to be a global leader in experiential legal education, providing students of law with the knowledge, skills, and ethical and social values essential to serving clients and the public interest. Through teaching, scholarship and public service we work to promote social justice and to enhance understanding of law’s impact on individuals, enterprises and communities, at home and around the world.

In striving to achieve these goals, full-time faculty members at the School of Law have workload responsibilities defined below in terms of teaching, research/scholarship/professional development and service.

Section 2. Types of appointments and distribution of duties

Subject to modifications described in Section 3 below, workload responsibilities are allocated among full-time faculty members at the School of Law in accordance with the following guidelines:

a. Untenured tenure-track faculty

40% teaching

Untenured tenure-track faculty members teach four upper-level quarter courses or one first-year semester course and two upper level quarter courses. A first-year semester course involving four or five semester credit hours is treated as the workload equivalent of two upper level quarter courses. Clinical teaching conducted over three quarters is treated as a full upper level teaching load equivalent to four upper level quarter courses.

As part of their teaching responsibilities, all full-time faculty members should also be available to students for supervision of student work and for general academic advising. Supervision of student work may include review and evaluation of independent study projects, papers submitted for the law school’s Rigorous Writing Requirement, and student participation in moot court and other competitions. Responsibilities may also include serving as faculty advisor for a student organization.

50% research/scholarship

As specified in NUSL Rules on tenure and promotion standards, scholarly product normally consists of work published or accepted for publication. The scholarly product may also include unpublished work, including documents produced in the practice of law (e.g., briefs, legal opinions or memoranda, study reports for governmental agencies, etc.), and written materials produced for clinical legal education (e.g., course schemata, simulations, and problems). For purposes of the present policy, research and scholarly activity may also include knowledge translation including via blogs and social media,
participation in interdisciplinary endeavors, creative activity manifested in performances or exhibitions, efforts to obtain internal and external funding, and engagement of students in scholarship.

10% service

Service includes leadership of and engagement in committees, professional organizations, and groups both within and outside the university. Administrative and program responsibilities that do not entail a course release (see Section 3 below) are service assignments that fall within this workload allocation. Within the School of Law, untenured tenure-track faculty members typically receive one committee assignment, or two lighter service assignments involving an approximately equivalent time commitment.

b. Tenured faculty

40% teaching

Tenured faculty members teach four upper-level quarter courses or one first-year semester course and two upper level quarter courses. A first-year semester course is treated as the workload equivalent of two upper level quarter courses. Clinical teaching conducted over three quarters is treated as a full upper level teaching load equivalent to four upper level quarter courses.

All full-time faculty should be available to students for supervision of student work and for general academic advising. Supervision of student work may include review and evaluation of independent study projects, papers submitted for the law school’s Rigorous Writing Requirement, and student participation in moot court and other competitions. Responsibilities may also include serving as faculty advisor for a student organization.

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20% service

Service includes leadership of and engagement in committees, professional organizations and groups both within and outside the university. Within the School of Law, tenured faculty members typically receive two committee assignments, or service assignments involving an approximately equivalent time commitment. Administrative and program responsibilities that do not entail a course release (see Section 3 below) are service assignments that fall within this workload allocation. Appointment to serve as the chair of a committee with a particularly intensive work schedule in a given year may be treated as a single assignment equivalent to two standard committee assignments.
c. Non-tenure-track teaching faculty

60% teaching

Full-time non-tenure-track teaching faculty generally teach courses representing 16 to 18 credit hours (whether taught in first-year semesters or in upper level quarters). A first-year semester course of four or five semester credit hours (other than classes in the LSSC program) is treated as equivalent to six quarter credit hours. When a teaching faculty member’s assigned teaching responsibilities involve academic instruction for students in class sessions without course credit (such as teaching in the Academic Support Program), then the teaching assignment is converted to quarter credit hours for purposes of this workload policy, based on the time allocated.

All full-time faculty should be available to students for supervision of student work and for general academic advising as a part of their teaching workload. Supervision of student work may include review and evaluation of independent study projects, papers submitted for the law school’s Rigorous Writing Requirement, and student participation in moot court and other competitions. Responsibilities may also include serving as faculty advisor for a student organization.

20% professional development

Full-time non-tenure-track teaching faculty members are expected to remain current in their fields, engage in professional development programs and attend relevant conferences. Professional development activities may, but do not necessarily, include work involving research and scholarship as defined for tenured and tenure-track faculty. The proportional allocation of workload to professional development for teaching faculty members, including research and scholarship, reflects the scope of their responsibilities as teaching specialists in understanding and developing innovations in legal education and training students for evolving roles in the legal profession.

20% service

Service includes leadership of and engagement in committees, professional organizations and groups both within and outside the university. Within the School of Law, non-tenure track teaching faculty typically receive two committee assignments, or service assignments involving an approximately equivalent time commitment. Administrative and program responsibilities that do not entail a course release (see Section 3 below) are service assignments that fall within this workload allocation. Appointment to serve as the chair of a committee with a particularly intensive work schedule in a given year may be treated as a single assignment equivalent to two standard committee assignments. The proportional allocation of workload to service reflects the scope of teaching faculty responsibilities to explore innovations in legal education and to provide expertise as teaching specialists to committees, professional organizations, and groups as they respond to changes in the legal profession.

d. One quarter off per year

All tenured, tenure-track and full-time non-tenure-track teaching faculty who hold nine-month contracts are entitled to one quarter off from the workload responsibilities described above each academic year. The quarter off may be during any one of the quarters in the School of Law’s year-
round schedule. The quarter off is scheduled in consultation with the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. Aside from the designated quarter off, faculty members must fulfill service responsibilities, even when not teaching a course. To ensure that the School of Law provides a year-round upper-level curriculum, all tenured and tenure-track full-time faculty, and non-tenure-track teaching faculty for whom summer teaching is appropriate, given the nature of their teaching, are expected to be available to teach every other summer quarter.

e. Professors of Practice

Professors of Practice have workload responsibilities similar to other non-tenure-track teaching faculty (subsections c. and d. above), but specific duties may vary according to the terms of their contracts.

f. Research Professors

Research Professors have workload responsibilities defined by the terms of their contracts.

g. Full-time faculty with 50% or more administrative load

Full-time faculty with 50% or more administrative load are not covered in this workload policy. These positions include the Dean, the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, and the Associate Dean and Director of Research and Information Services.

Section 3. Criteria for modifications in workload responsibilities of full-time faculty

a. Pre-tenure course releases: Untenured tenure-track faculty members receive one course release during their first year of teaching and a 50% release of their course load (one first year semester course or two upper level quarter courses) during one academic year prior to applying for tenure.

b. Significant administrative or other service responsibilities and other circumstances warranting a course release or other workload modifications: The Associate Dean of Experiential Education, the Associate Dean of Research, and Faculty Directors of programs with significant managerial requirements (such as the Faculty Director for LL.M and International Programs) and other faculty members with significant administrative responsibilities in a particular year may be given a release from a portion of their course teaching obligations. Temporary workload modifications for full-time faculty members may also be made in order to accommodate other types of circumstances, including retirement transition planning.

c. Overload teaching: After meeting the 100% workload requirement, faculty members may arrange with the Dean and Associate Dean to teach additional courses for compensation. Such overload may include the teaching of short courses and intensive courses outside of the regular programming.

d. Course buy-outs: A faculty member may apply to the Dean to buy out an assigned course. If approved, an upper level course buy-out requires the faculty member to arrange funding in accordance with university requirements, currently 1/6th of his/her salary and a corresponding portion of fringe benefits. A first-year semester course is equivalent to two upper level quarter courses.

e. Sabbatical leaves: Tenured faculty members may apply for a sabbatical leave in accordance with the procedures in the Faculty Handbook, resulting in a 50% or 100% reduction in workload responsibilities for the academic year.

f. Professional leaves: Full-time faculty members may apply for a professional leave in accordance with the Faculty Handbook for a period of up to one year with potential for a second year. The specific conditions of such professional leaves are determined on an individual basis. A professional leave
results in a proportional reduction of workload responsibilities based on the amount of time allocated to the leave.

g. Other leaves: In accordance with the Faculty Handbook and the university’s Paid Time Off Policy, full-time faculty members are eligible for certain types of paid time off, including sick time, which accrues based on number of years of completed service. In addition, pursuant to the Policy on Leaves of Absence, full-time faculty members may obtain certain unpaid leaves of absence, including a Parental Leave of Absence or a Family and Medical Leave of Absence. When these paid and unpaid leaves will involve a significant absence from work, then assigned workload responsibilities in the academic year are proportionally reduced, based on the total amount of time allocated to the leave or series of leaves.

h. Parental teaching relief: In accordance with the university’s Policy on Parental Teaching Relief, tenured and tenure-track faculty who become parents are eligible for a one-semester course load reduction without a reduction in salary or benefits, in addition to any paid medical leave or unpaid family leave. These arrangements for parental teaching relief result in a workload reduction of one first-year semester course or two upper-level quarter courses in the specified year, without modifying other workload obligations. The scheduling of the course reduction is arranged with the approval of the Dean and in consultation with the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.

i. Joint appointments: Faculty members holding joint appointments with other university units will receive a workload reduction at the School of Law proportional to the percentage of their appointment in the other unit. The School of Law Dean and Associate Dean of Academic Affairs will engage in regular consultations with their counterparts in other academic units to ensure that the faculty members holding joint appointments are not subject to conflicting or excessive workloads, keeping in mind the nature of the faculty member’s appointment. To accommodate curriculum needs and schedules in different units, workload distributions may be shifted or otherwise adjusted as needed over multiple academic years.

j. A full-time faculty member whose primary teaching duties involve clinical teaching may sometimes be asked to replace a clinical course with a non-clinical course without other changes to his or her load.

Section 4. Workload Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed and updated by the faculty at least every five years.

Section 5. Transparency and Appeal Process

a. This workload policy document will be electronically available to all full-time faculty members through the Provost’s Office. In addition, the Office of the Dean will maintain and make available to full-time faculty a list of the teaching, committee, and other administrative assignments for all full-time faculty members in each academic year.

b. Faculty members who believe that their individual workload assignments are inconsistent with this workload policy may appeal their workload assignments by submitting a request to a committee composed of the Dean of the School of Law and two members of the faculty to be elected by the voting members of the faculty on an annual basis. Additionally, the faculty shall elect one alternate member to serve in the event that one of the elected committee members wishes to pursue such an appeal. Faculty members may also make use of the grievance process described in the Faculty Handbook.
Approved by:

Full-time faculty of the School of Law
Date: March 5, 2018

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Dean Jeremy Paul
Date: March 26, 2018

Submitted to the Provost’s Office March 27, 2018
Approved by Provost May 15, 2018
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.

Document is consistent with published College and University policies.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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:

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.

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.