

Mills College at Northeastern University
Full-time Faculty Workload Policy
Proposed December of 2023 for 2024-2025 academic year and beyond

The annual workload for all full-time Mills College faculty members is intended to collectively reflect the goals and aspirations of Mills College and to ensure alignment of these activities with the overall mission and goals of the university. The goals of the workload policy are to fulfill the responsibilities of the college by recognizing and supporting faculty members' diverse strengths, talents, and contributions to the college and university, and to ensure equitable consideration in merit review. A normal workload for faculty members includes teaching, research/scholarship activities, and service. As we are a college that is still in transition, we have prioritized a workload policy that will allow the college to adapt to changing workload needs as they develop. We have also prioritized a “one faculty” model that not only reflects our values but realistically acknowledges the large amount of service and/or research that non-tenure track faculty have done historically, are currently doing, and that is going to be necessary for many years forward to ensure the success of Mills College at Northeastern University.

Mills College has different categories of faculty appointments including tenure-track, tenured, and full-time non-tenure track. Non-tenure-track faculty includes various Professor of Practice, Associate Adjunct Professor, and Adjunct Professor titles.

Annual workload for full-time faculty members will be allocated into a total of seven individual workload 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”).

All faculty are required to devote at least one unit (or 14.3 percent of workload) to service. Tenure-track faculty members should avoid devoting more than one workload unit to service and unit heads should monitor service levels to ensure that service levels do not rise above this. The workload for research active full-time faculty is four units of teaching (sixteen credit hours, or two four-credit hour courses per semester) and two units of research (as illustrated by “Research Emphasis” in the table below). The workload for full-time non-tenure track faculty members who are not research active is six workload units of teaching and one workload unit of service. Presumed teaching loads for this group of faculty are in the range of twenty-four credit hours, or three classes per semester (as illustrated by “Teaching Emphasis” in the table below).

Three examples of workload structures for full-time faculty are as follows:



Teaching Emphasis	T	T	T	T	T	T	S
Service Emphasis	T	T	T	T	S	S	S

Structure one (emphasis on research):

Faculty members devote four workload units to teaching, two to research, and one to service. Faculty member must have an average of a 3 or above (limited to a four-year lookback) in the research category of their merit review and permission from the dean and unit head to qualify for this structure.

Structure two (emphasis on teaching):

Faculty members devote six workload units to teaching and one to service. Faculty member must have an average of a 3 or above (limited to a four-year lookback) in the teaching category of their merit review and permission from the dean and unit head to qualify for this structure.

Structure three (emphasis on service):

Faculty members devote four workload units to teaching and three to service. Faculty member might have an average of a 3 or above (limited to a four-year lookback) in the service category of their merit review or they might be taking on additional service positions in the forthcoming year (establishing a new major, chairing a program, establishing an institute, etc.) or they might have permission from the dean and unit head to qualify for this structure.

The faculty member's preferred workload structure will be proposed by the unit head, after consultation with the faculty member and then with the Dean's Office. It must be approved by the dean.

As previously stated, the presumed minimum workload for research active full time faculty is four four-credit classes during the fall and spring semester. However, workload modifications for individual faculty members or groups of faculty may arise from a variety of sources. These include university policy and Mills College policies. The dean has the discretion to approve any modification to the minimum workload. These include but are not limited to:

- Significant administrative assignments, for example unit heads, major committee assignments from the dean's office, etc.
- Reduced teaching loads to provide research support to faculty recognized with chaired professorships, distinguished professorships, or other considerations.
- Reduced teaching loads to accommodate specific teaching and service requirements.

Course buyout policy.

A faculty member can buy out of one class per academic year at the cost of 1/7 of the academic year salary plus benefits for personal reasons. Only external funds can be utilized for this purpose.

Overloads.

Overloads are discouraged. Faculty who are requested to take on an overload by their unit head should realize that this will put them on a de facto “teaching emphasis” for the year. If a faculty member on “research emphasis” takes on an overload they should be aware that their merit evaluations will be evaluated as a “research emphasis” and that the overload does not count towards merit.

Joint Appointees.

Mills College has some full-time faculty members with joint appointments in other colleges. Some of these faculty members have their tenure home and majority of commitment in Mills College, while others are tenured in other colleges, with a minority of commitment to Mills College. Faculty members with joint appointments are expected to provide teaching, research, and service to the units where they are appointed, consistent with their percentage of commitment to each unit. The unit with the majority of commitment will take the lead on establishing workload. The unit heads and college deans, from both units, as appropriate, will coordinate the workload expectations with the faculty member and with the appropriate contact in the other unit during the merit review. Workload expectations should be clearly communicated to faculty members prior to faculty being considered for joint appointments.

Workload Appeal.

A faculty member must file a written appeal to the Merit Review Committee within two weeks of the original notification of the workload assignment. The Merit Review Committee will consider the appeal on its merits and consult with the unit head. The Merit Review Committee then informs the dean of their recommendation. The dean will make the ultimate determination as to whether a modified workload assignment is warranted. The dean must respond within two weeks of receiving the appeal.

This policy will be renewed and updated by the Tenure and Promotion Committee every three years.

APPENDIX: CURRENT MERIT REVIEW CRITERIA:

THE GUIDELINES

Faculty on the research workload will be evaluated in three areas: research, teaching, and service. Faculty not on the research-active workload will be evaluated in two areas: teaching and service. The percentage of value assigned to these categories will correspond to the faculty member’s workload.

MINIMUM EXPECTATIONS FOR A THREE AND ABOVE:

Performance of faculty member during the review period is exceptional, going beyond stated responsibilities for teaching, scholarship, and/or service, as anticipated by their particular discipline. If an activity has already been listed in a merit review, reason should be provided for why it should be considered again. For most faculty, qualifying for this category will be an exception rather than the rule. It is meant to recognize exceptional work.

For research, scholarship, and creative work...

The faculty member has published a peer- or editorially-reviewed scholarly book, likely one published by a university press or an established commercial or trade press, or published a highly significant body of peer or editorially-reviewed articles, if the faculty member is in a field such as Natural and Health Sciences or Business that prioritizes peer-reviewed articles (rather than books). This work could consist of an unusually extensive and/or significant publication or multiple publications of combined quantity and quality that sum to an unusually high level of production.

The faculty member has published an expansive, substantial creative book that shows intellectual depth and rigor, innovative style, and creative accomplishment and has been peer or editorially reviewed. The faculty member has published a peer or editorially-reviewed edited book.

The faculty member has published a peer- or editorially-reviewed book-length translation. Creativity and scholarship as reflected in resourcefulness and innovation of interpretation will be taken into account when awarding merit, as well as length and placement. Merit committees are encouraged to consult the guidelines on evaluating translation formulated by the Modern Language Association (https://www.mla.org/ec_guidelines_translation).

The faculty member has published a textbook by a major publishing house for use in college classrooms. Scholarly monographs or syntheses adopted for class readings are not textbooks, nor are sets of readings, created by a faculty member for use in a class or department. Range based on quality of press, quality of contributors, quality of conceptualization, and (for co-edited) evidence of amount of contribution.

Applicants may make a special case for something unusually significant: a long introductory essay; piece in a state-of-the-art collection; major, multi-volume editorial projects or

encyclopedias. Collections of essays solicited and edited for the volume should receive more credit than collections of existing essays and/or documents.

The faculty member had a major exhibition or screening or performance at an established, recognized, national/international institution.

The faculty member has received a major external grant for their work or has been awarded a space at a major residency or fellowship program.

Applicants may also make a special case for any sort of research based work that they have done that is not covered by these categories but that is an exceptionally significant accomplishment that contributes to their field.

For teaching....

The faculty member has pursued a significant innovation in classroom teaching that is above and beyond the convention. Examples might include creating a jointly taught course that spans Northeastern's global network, a class in partnership with a non-university institution (e.g., a museum, community organization, NGO, or with a group of students in the local school system), creating and teaching a new course, or a Dialogue of Civilizations course, or redesigning a class (such as moving it to virtual or moving from a seminar to a lecture format), and having exceptional TRACE evaluations.

Merit can also be granted to those professors who can document that they spend an unexpected or extraordinary amount of time with students outside the classroom such as in conferences, tutoring, or group workshops outside of the time allotted for office hours. Faculty members should provide evidence of design such as teaching goals and work involved as well as successful implementation. Faculty are also welcome to refer to course planning work for courses that were eventually canceled.

Up to three pages of indicators of exceptional teaching may be included in the portfolio at the discretion of the faculty member for consideration. These may include evidence of innovative teaching, and evidence of the outcome of undergraduate and graduate research mentoring.

For service:

The faculty member has participated in a large body of service work outside the college with a volume that exceeds the expectation of his/her rank or seniority. This service should not be

compensated with a course release and/or stipend. Among the possibilities, the faculty member has taken a leadership role in an exceptional professionally-based community service such as leading a team that is organizing a major conference for a professional organization, serving as an officer in a professional organization, served as an editor of a major scholarly journal or publication series, curating or co-curating a major exhibition or program at a recognized cultural institution, peer-reviewing for major scholarly publication, serving on an appointed civic commission or advisory board based on recognized expertise.

This service can also be located within the university, such as when the faculty members has served as a mentor to students as they apply for graduate programs, mentored students in the course of their own research, directed studies, organized a speaker series at the College or organized a local conference, lead comprehensive program reviews, national job searches, or comprehensive curricular restructuring, or spearheaded innovative departmental initiatives. Up to three pages of documentation can be submitted, such as a list of the work accomplished, including the amount of time, the effort taken, and documented successful outcomes. (In the event of terms of service that are for more than one year, faculty members may receive merit pay one time and may apply any year during their term.)

MINIMUM EXPECTATIONS FOR A TWO AND ABOVE:

Faculty member fulfills responsibilities in teaching, scholarship, and research, as anticipated by their particular discipline. Faculty who are performing well in the duties described by their workload would typically earn this category of merit yearly.

For research, scholarship, and creative work... ..

The faculty member, over the last year, has published or presented work that is less involved than the work included in the guidelines for Exceeds Expectations. This category might include any of the following: book chapters in edited collections; work that is not based on original research such as encyclopedia entries, reprints of their own scholarly work (especially when the reprints bring significant attention to the author), book review essays, brief polemics, opinion pieces, and position papers; published a peer or editorially-reviewed article or achieved significant progress on a research project(s) and presented that progress at a nationally recognized professional conference; invited talks at other universities, talks, exhibitions, performances or presentations at established art institutions; participation in external or university-wide grants, such as Impact Engines. For artists who present their work in museum or cultural institution spaces, this might mean group shows rather than singular exhibitions. For

creative writers this might mean publication of individual poems or short stories in nationally prominent magazines, anthologies, or websites.

Applicants may also make a special case for any sort of research-based work that they have done that is not covered by these categories but that is an accomplishment that contributes to their field.

For teaching....

The faculty member has taught their assigned load of courses, and done a good job of executing courses that empower students to achieve the learning outcomes.

For service...

The faculty member has fulfilled their service duties as described in their workload.

FOR A ONE OR BELOW:

Faculty member falls short of stated responsibilities in teaching, scholarship, and/or research, as described in their workload, and anticipated by their particular discipline.