

Workload Policy  
Department of Physical Therapy, Movement and Rehabilitation Sciences  
Bouvé College of Health Sciences  
Faculty Workload Policy and Procedures

**Preamble: Goal and Purpose:**

The purpose of the PTMRS Full-time Faculty Workload policy is to ensure equitable workloads across the department and to assist faculty members to strive for work-life balance, by offering flexible scheduling, as aligned with the Northeastern University Faculty Handbook (<https://faculty.northeastern.edu/handbook/>). The policy is intended to reflect the vision and goals of the department by supporting faculty innovation, education and research into physical therapy, human movement and rehabilitation sciences. The policy is designed to be a transparent communication of the minimal workload expectations while acknowledging the different roles and responsibilities of full-time faculty and that the allocation and reporting of teaching, scholarship/professional development and service responsibilities are made in a transparent and consistent manner. Per the *Faculty Handbook* the annual workload of all full-time faculty will be distributed among teaching, scholarship/professional development and service. The percentages of these activities will vary by faculty appointments, roles, and responsibilities, and may vary during a faculty member's appointment.

The current workload policy will be available in the PTMRS Faculty Handbook which will be located on Teams, Sharepoint or a similar University-sponsored electronic site. The current workload policy will be distributed annually to full-time department faculty, including those with joint appointments, at the beginning of each academic year. This policy will be reviewed by department faculty every three years. Per the University's *Faculty Handbook*, each full-time faculty member will have access to a summary of departmental workload assignments, developed by the chair and updated annually as part of the performance review process. The summary of assignments will be located on Sharepoint or a similar university-sponsored electronic site.

**Operational Definitions:**

**Teaching**

1.1. Teaching is the formal and informal instruction of students that includes the delivery of organized course instruction (e.g., denoted by a CRN), office hours for students, mentoring, preparation and follow-through for student learning experiences. The meritorious supervision of student research or field work (e.g., clinical education, DPT/Masters Capstone, directed studies with associated CRN) workload effort is awarded proportional by credit hour.

2. **Service:**

2.1. Service includes the responsibilities related to departmental, college, and university committees, diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts, service to professional organizations or academic community as well as scholarly community engagement and outreach.

3. Scholarship:
  - 3.1. Research includes all forms of knowledge creation directly by the faculty, advising of graduate student researchers, and completion of grant applications to obtain funds in support of research activities.
  
4. Types of Faculty: Three types of full-time faculty appointments exist in the department: faculty with clinical and teaching appointments, tenure-track (TT), and tenured (T) faculty. The definitions of these classifications can be found in the University's *Faculty Handbook*.
  - 4.1. Tenure eligible faculty:
    - 4.1.1. Tenured Research Active: 2 semester appointment: "Research active" means that faculty must demonstrate a record of scholarly productivity (i.e., peer-reviewed journal articles, patents, successfully funded grants, discoveries of new knowledge) in their area of expertise, at a level that is consistent with expectations for peers and aspirational schools at Research-1 universities. This determination will be made by department chair. Associate Professors with Tenure on Entry will be given this status automatically for their first three years.
  
    - 4.1.2. Tenured faculty – not research active: 2 semester appointment: These faculty are not actively engaged in scholarly productivity in their area of expertise and are not actively seeking grants or participating in the activities consistent with "research active" or faculty. This determination will be made by department chair.
  
    - 4.1.3. Tenure-Track Faculty: Faculty who have probationary appointments who will be eligible to be considered for tenure, consistent with the Faculty Handbook. All tenure-track faculty will be given "Research Active" status through their tenure seeking years.
  
  - 4.2. Full-time Faculty with Clinical and Teaching Appointments: Faculty in this classification have a primary responsibility to teaching.
    - 4.2.1. Full-time Faculty with Clinical and Teaching Appointments: 2 semester appointment.
  
    - 4.2.2. Full-time Faculty with Clinical and Teaching Appointments: 3 semester (52 week) appointment.
  
5. Definition of a Course: A course is defined by registered course number and CRN section. Courses which house 2 CRNs together (such as lab sections) will only be counted separately if they occur at a different time. *Example* PT 5502 CRN 32145 and CRN 32146 occur from 2-5 on Monday is a 1 credit 3-hour lab. This will be counted as 1 course and 3 workload units for the faculty involved in the course.
  - 5.1. Workload unit: The workload unit is a measure of effort applied to faculty teaching. The workload unit considers factors that include number of credits per course and in class 2

contact hours. The number of workload units per course will vary depending upon course attributes.

- 5.2. DPT Capstone: Courses that have their own CRN that occur over 2 semesters count as 1 course for 2 workload units. ***DPT Capstone cannot be the faculty members only course.*** This course sequence crosses into two academic years (i.e., DPT Capstone 1 is in Spring semester and DPT Capstone 2 is in the fall semester of the following academic year).
- 5.3. Masters Capstone: Teaching a MS student through their Master's capstone will count for 1 course for 2 workload units. It is expected that the student works with their capstone advisor starting at the beginning of the Spring semester. Since this course may occur over the summer semester, individual workload will be determined with the Chairperson. ***Masters Capstone cannot be the faculty members only course.***

**Policy:**

The department chair, with assistance from the associate chair, will determine workload assignments of the faculty. The DPT Program Director will provide input and review all DPT program fulltime faculty workload assignments for DPT program. The PhD and MS Program Directors will provide input and review all PhD/MS program fulltime faculty workload assignments. Teaching and service assignments for the following academic year will be determined by the end of the spring semester. Adjustments may be made throughout the year as needs arise with notification and discussion with the individual faculty.

**Procedure for Establishing Workload:**

1. The department chair will meet with each full-time faculty member to discuss their present and future workload assignments, following the process and timeline below.
  - 1.1. Goals Meeting: Prior to the end of the fall semester, the chair will meet with faculty individually to discuss goals for teaching, service and scholarship/professional development along with anticipated department needs for the upcoming academic year. This meeting will serve to inform the chair's considerations of workload as well as individual faculty goals. Ongoing scholarship, research/grant submissions and faculty development needs including continuing education and mentoring by senior faculty will be discussed.
  - 1.2. Preliminary Workload Assignment: Chair will determine teaching assignments based on the feedback from the individual faculty meetings noted above, current department needs, and the following (in no order of importance):
    - 1.2.1. Courses being offered for the term
    - 1.2.2. Expertise of the faculty
    - 1.2.3. Student cohort size
    - 1.2.4. Professional development of the faculty
    - 1.2.5. Opportunity for faculty to teach early and later student cohorts

1.2.6. Teaching load requirements of the faculty respective to appointment and contract length

1.3. Performance view & Workload Meeting: The chair will discuss and provide a written draft of preliminary plans for workload based on the above schedule at the faculty-member's annual merit/performance review meeting. This meeting will take place annually between the end of February and end of March each year.

1.4. Final Workload Assignment: The chair will release a final workload document to each faculty member by the end of spring semester. Changes to workload may occur based on department needs.

**Procedure for Addressing Workload Concerns:**

Faculty have the right to bring forward concerns regarding their workload assignments.

1. The faculty member will submit their concerns in writing to the department chair within five business days of receiving their individual workload assignment.

1.1. A formal meeting will be scheduled within five business days of receiving their workload assignment to discuss the concern with the faculty member and the chair and associate department chair.

1.2. The chair and associate chair will review the faculty's submission and applicable documentation to make a determination regarding an adjustment within five business days of the meeting.

1.3. If the faculty member does not agree with the chair's decision at that time, they may then forward their concern to the college dean within five business days of the meeting. The decision of the college dean is final.

2. Modification of Workload: Workloads may be modified under certain circumstances, including pre-tenured minimum course reductions, parental leaves, and medical leaves in accordance with published college and university policies. The department chair, with assistance from the associate department chair, will be responsible for determining workload modification for faculty.

**Calculation of Teaching Workload**

1. The university's baseline for course credits is 4 credits/class. Because some classes in the Department of Physical Therapy Movement and Rehabilitation Sciences require intensive clinical laboratory, hands on learning activities which may span 1-6 credits per course, workload units or number of courses may be used to clarify and ensure equity of a **1 course is 10%** framework. For example, a 1-credit teaching lab course that is three hours long will count for 3 workload units.

2. **Methodology:** When considering 100% of faculty members time, the total yearly workload is calculated as 40 *workload units*. It is important to note that **this is not** 40 hours/week but is a way to capture total effort across the entire academic year. It is also important to note that courses in PTMRS may not follow the traditional 4-credit model that the university follows. Workload units are used to make the process for assignment of teaching responsibilities transparent and equitable. Additionally, the university considers a baseline teaching assignment for FTNTT faculty on a 2-semester contract to be 6 courses at 4 credits each = 24 workload units.
3. With this baseline expectation, the allocation of *workload units* may be modified based on an individual's teaching percentage (e.g., 40% teaching workload would be 16 workload units per year of teaching activities, etc.) at the discretion of the chair and based on department needs. This allocation will be discussed with the individual faculty member prior to any change.
  - a. Full-time faculty with clinical and teaching appointments will use workload units (rather than number of courses) as their primary calculation of teaching workload.
  - b. Tenure/tenure track faculty will use number of courses (rather than workload units) as their primary calculation of teaching workload, consistent with their offer letters.
4. Table 1 illustrates different examples of different workload allocations. It is not inclusive of every permutation but serves as an example of how it may impact an individual faculty member.

**Faculty Specific Teaching Workload Expectations:**

1. Tenured Research Active, 2 semester appointment: A full-time teaching load for a tenured research active faculty member will consist of 3 courses per 2 semesters for 30% workload. This includes 2 didactic courses and a capstone course (DPT or Masters) or directed study.
2. Tenured faculty – not research active 2 semester appointment: The teaching workload for tenured faculty who are not research active will consist of approximately 6 courses per 2 semesters for 60% workload. This may include a capstone course (DPT or Masters).
3. Full-time Faculty with Clinical and Teaching Appointments, 2 semester appointment: A full-time teaching load for full-time faculty with clinical and teaching appointments will equal *approximately* 16-20 workload units (not to exceed 6 courses) for 60% workload.
4. Full-time Faculty with Clinical and Teaching Appointments 3 semester appointment: A full-time teaching load for full-time faculty with clinical and teaching appointments will consist of *approximately* 22-26 workload units (not to exceed 8 courses) for 60% workload.

**Table 1. Approximate Distribution of overall workload by faculty type**

**KEY:** Teaching (T); Service (S); Research (inclusive of Scholarship and Professional Development) (R)

*Each block represents ~10% of total workload*

T/TT Research Active	T	T	T	S	S	R	R	R	R	R
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T Research Inactive	T	T	T	T	T	T	S	S	R	R
NTT 39-week contract	T	T	T	T	T	T	S	S	R	R
NTT 52-week contract	T	T	T	T	T	T	S	S	R	R

## Teaching Workload Considerations:

1. The following are considerations for reducing teaching workload:
  - 1.1. A 10% workload reduction equal to one (1) course release or service reduction per year to faculty actively enrolled in an academic degree (EdD, PhD, DSc, etc.) program. The release is at the discretion of the chair based on department needs. Actively enrolled is defined by being in a degree granting program, completing a minimum of four courses per calendar year and on track to matriculation of the degree. Faculty in their dissertation phase can work with the department chair for other opportunities for additional release time.
  - 1.2. Research-active T/TT faculty or full-time faculty with clinical and teaching appointments who secure external funding may negotiate a reduction in their teaching. To obtain such 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.
  - 1.3. Tenure-track faculty will receive a 2/3<sup>rd</sup>s reduction in their teaching load in their first appointment year (i.e., 1 didactic course), and a 1/3<sup>rd</sup> reduction in year 2 (i.e., 1 didactic course and a capstone/directed study, not 2 didactic courses). Years 3 to 5 will consist of a full load (2 didactic courses and one capstone/directed study).
  - 1.4. The chair will address dual appointments individually based on the home department designation, and has the ability to change this trajectory based on unforeseen circumstance (e.g., delays in lab renovations).
  - 1.5. Teaching loads may be further reduced for administrative appointments or other factors listed below, at the chair's discretion. (WU=workload unit)
    - 1.5.1. 5 WU for clinical education faculty per clinical education course (See 7.3.6.3).
    - 1.5.2. 1 WU for faculty who coordinate multiple lab sections of a single lab course. If a lab is co-coordinated extra credit is not given.
    - 1.5.3. 1 WU for classes over 49 students that are not being team taught.
    - 1.5.4. 1 WU for online co-op discussion board.
    - 1.5.5. 1 WU for full time faculty with clinical and teaching appointments who provide specific clinical expertise to clinical education by mid-term conference evaluation calls (7-10)
    - 1.5.6. 1 WU for faculty that review > 50 admission applications during a cycle.
    - 1.5.7. ½ the course WU for new course development (e.g. 2WU for a 4SH course, 1.5WU for a 3SH course).
2. The following activities *do not* reduce a faculty member's teaching load, except in extraordinary circumstances, at the discretion of the department chair:
  - 2.1. Teaching a new course (WU are credited for development of a new course).
  - 2.2. Employing innovative teaching methods.
  - 2.3. Directed or independent study supervision *in the absence of registrar course number and CRN section*.
  - 2.4. Mentoring or advising students informally.
  - 2.5. Directing or supervising students' honors theses.

- 2.6. Supervising students' independent or mentored research projects.
- 2.7. Dissertation service.

- 3. Extra Compensation: In the unlikely event that the need arises for efforts beyond the 40 units workload the following will occur. If the chair of the department determines a need for this, and if a faculty member's workload is in excess of 10% of normal teaching expectations for their role (in terms of workload units or courses), they will be compensated at the university rate for extra compensation. An effort to keep all faculty within commensurate workload expectations will be made.
- 4. Considerations when courses are team-taught: In team taught courses, up to two faculty may be given full credit and the amount of workload units for a course provided the course has more than 49 students and both faculty are involved throughout the entire course. In cases where faculty are involved in portions of courses, teach specific modules or certain topic areas, proportions of workload units will be given for the course per the list below, at the discretion of the Chair.
  - 4.1. Up to 25% of the course -  $\frac{1}{4}$  WUs
  - 4.2. 25-50% of the course -  $\frac{1}{2}$  WUs
  - 4.3. 51-75% of course -  $\frac{3}{4}$  WUs
  - 4.4. 75-100% of course - full WUs
  - 4.5. DPT capstone may be team taught and be given full credit only if the team is comprised of one clinical and teaching and a T/TT faculty.
- 5. Clinical Education Courses: One clinical education course will equal 5 WUs for clinical education faculty.

### **Scholarship/Research & Professional Development**

- 1. All full-time faculty with clinical and teaching appointments will have a minimum of 10% allocation for scholarship. The full-time faculty with clinical and teaching appointments expectation of scholarship should be related to their field of expertise which demonstrates excellence in their profession.
- 2. All tenure track and tenured faculty are expected to seek and obtain grant funding from funding sources consistent with their areas of research. TT/T faculty must demonstrate a record of scholarly productivity (i.e., peer-reviewed journal articles, patents, successfully funded grants, discoveries of new knowledge) in their area of expertise, at a level that is consistent with expectations for peers and aspirational schools at Research-1universities.
- 3. Non-research active tenured faculty must be assigned a minimum of 10% scholarship.

Included in the scholarship/research workload is professional development. All faculty will be given 10% workload for professional development. Professional development includes ongoing continuing education, mentorship for research and teaching expertise and attendance at professional conferences. Professional development activities should be listed under



Research/Scholarship Activity in the Annual Merit and Performance documents.

### **Service Workload**

1. All full-time faculty regardless of tenure status are required to participate in the following for 20% service workload:
  - 1.1. 2 department committees.
  - 1.2. 1 external service commitment whether it is college, university or professional area. It is important to note that many college and university service opportunities may be elected or appointed.
  - 1.3. 1 department admissions committee which may include application review.
  - 1.4. 2 admissions events per year. This may include, but not limited to, virtual recruitment “chats”, in person welcome days or accepted students showcase presentations.
2. Additional 5 -10 service percentages may be given to faculty at the discretion of the chair based on the following considerations:
  - 2.1. Chairing a committee with extensive time commitment (i.e. Curricular Affairs, Performance Review, comprehensive examinations, etc.).
  - 2.2. Serve on college or university committees with extensive time commitment (i.e. Curriculum, Tenure & Promotion committees, etc.).
  - 2.3. Serve as coordinators of certificate or concentration programs with extensive time commitment.
  - 2.4. Serve as laboratory coordinators or lab safety officers with extensive time commitment.
  - 2.5. Serve as a faculty advisor for students.
3. Directing educational programs is service, **not** teaching. Education program directors may or may not receive a course reduction and/or subsequent administrative allocation for their program direction responsibilities, at the discretion of their chairperson or dean. Small programs will not necessarily result in course reductions, and in some instances, directing an educational program may meet a faculty member’s service contribution to their department.
4. Other Considerations:
  - 4.1. Clinical Work: Some faculty require work in a clinical environment to maintain specialization or certifications. For these reasons, the university encourages full-time faculty members so desiring to engage in these activities and to arrange their schedules so as to allow the equivalent of one day away from campus during the regular five-day week of the faculty member’s contract period. It is important to emphasize, however, that engagement in outside professional activities by a full-time faculty member does not imply or result in a reduction in the faculty member’s university workload. The amount of time spent on compensated outside professional activities must not exceed the equivalent of one day (e.g., two half-days) during the usual five-day week of the

full-time faculty member's contract period. Some averaging over the academic year may be possible, but in any event ***these activities should not conflict or interfere with the faculty member's schedule of assignments and responsibilities at the University.*** (<https://faculty.northeastern.edu/handbook/personnel-policies/faculty-outside-professional-activities/> )

- 4.2. Department stewardship: While not formally captured in workload, department stewardship, as reflected through engagement and collegiality, is an expectation for all faculty members in the department. Department stewardship activities will be considered in a faculty member's performance/merit review process through their merit review summary. All faculty are expected, in proportion to their department appointment, to attend all faculty meetings, support faculty searches, and attend department seminars/colloquia. To support student success, promote the department and support our goals, faculty are expected to participate in and assist with professional activities that include the following but are not limited to:
  - 4.2.1. Exam proctoring (written and practical examinations)
  - 4.2.2. Specialized laboratory activities (e.g., simulation, community consultant)
  - 4.2.3. Commencement related activities
  - 4.2.4. New student orientation
  - 4.2.5. White Coat ceremony (DPT)
  - 4.2.6. PhD defenses
  - 4.2.7. Community-engaged educational activities (e.g., exchange programs, outreach programs)
  - 4.2.8. Comprehensive practical examination (CPE)

#### **Administrative Workload:**

1. Administrative appointments in the department and college will be given appropriate percentage weight and workload will be decreased in accordance with the respective position.

#### **Faculty with Joint Appointments:**

1. The workload of a jointly appointed (i.e., interdisciplinary) faculty member will be commensurate with the faculty member's appointment percentage across their departments. Jointly appointed tenured or tenure-track faculty members carry a primary obligation to the tenure home such that teaching, and service activities are commensurate with their percentages of their workload.
  - 1.1. The chair of the faculty member's tenure home department will follow the office of the Provost guidelines for merit review. The chairs of the respective joint appointment departments will communicate regarding their jointly appointed faculty member's workload prior to each goals and performance review/workload meetings.
  - 1.2. The chairs of both departments will negotiate service requirements, so they do not exceed the required service expectations/percentage of the department with the lowest workload.

1.3. Faculty candidates considering jointly appointed positions will be informed by the department chair(s) of workload expectations across units during development of their individual workload.

**Table 2** Approximate Workload Expectations of Jointly Appointed Faculty (T/TT/Research Active)  
 KEY: Teaching (T); Service (S); Research (inclusive of scholarship and Professional Development) (R)

Each block represents 10% of total workload. \*Half service may be participating on a search committee or serving on a less labor-intensive committee.

% appointment in PTMRS										
100% PTMRS	T	T	T	T	S	S	R	R	R	R
75% PTMRS	T	T	T	S	50% S	R	R	R		
50% PTMRS	T	T	S	R	R					
25% PTMRS	T	50% S	R							

**Approvals**

Date of approval by department chair: December 6, 2023

Date of faculty approval: December 19, 2023

Anticipated date of next review: January 15, 2027

Date of approval of the unit’s dean: January 8, 2024

Date document was sent to the Provost’s Office to be included in the master list of policies for all units: January 8, 2024

Date of approval of the provost: January 23, 2024