



Northeastern University

College of Social Sciences and Humanities

Department of Philosophy and Religion Full-time Faculty Workload Policy

Approved by the Department 10/1/2024

Approved by the Dean 2/21/2026

Approved by the Provost March 16, 2026

The Department of Philosophy and Religion is approving this policy in compliance with the Faculty Handbook statement on faculty workloads approved by the Faculty Senate on April 4, 2017 and approved by the Board of Trustees on June 7, 2017 and with the workload guidelines subsequently issued by the Office of the Provost and College of Social Sciences and Humanities. The policy describes the default or base-line workload expectations for full-time faculty members of the Department based on their rank and type of appointment, with an emphasis on teaching load. The Department recognizes that there can be variance in workload, including teaching load, within a rank. Therefore, the policy also describes the conditions under and processes by which a faculty member's teaching load can be modified from the default.

1. Overview of Full-time Faculty Responsibilities

According to the Faculty Handbook, the full-time Teaching Faculty of the University is composed of tenured and tenure-track faculty members as well as full-time non-tenure-track faculty members.

Full-time faculty members are involved in three types of activities: research and/or professional development, teaching, and service.

All full-time faculty are expected to be involved in teaching and service. Faculty with research appointments are additionally expected to be research active. Tenured faculty members have a special responsibility with respect to mentoring and promotion of tracked faculty members, both tenure/tenure-track and teaching professors. Non-tenure track faculty have an additional responsibility to engage in professional development.

1.1 Definition of Research-Active. Being research-active means engaging in an ongoing program of scholarship, disseminating scholarly work in peer-reviewed journals or scholarly books and presenting at scholarly conferences, disseminating knowledge and engaging with academic and non-

academic audiences and communities, actively seeking internal and external funding, and meaningfully engaging students in scholarship.

1.2 Description of Teaching Activities. Teaching includes the leading of courses and independent studies, as well as such things as the advising of graduate students where applicable, innovating curriculum, providing students with learning opportunities outside of courses, guest lecturing, and advising/mentoring students.

1.3 Description of Service Activities. Service activities within the university include such things as committee work, advising student organizations, developing extra-curricular programs and events, mentoring, contributing to faculty governance, and involvement in roles that contribute to the Department, College, and University. Service to the profession includes such things as serving as a reviewer for publications and grant competitions, editorial work, serving as an external reviewer for tenure and promotion cases, and serving as an elected officer within professional organizations. Service to the public involves using one's scholarly and education expertise in contexts outside of higher education, such as contributing to public policy development, publishing for non-academic audiences, participating in non-academic education events, and giving talks for non-academic audiences.

2. Distribution of Responsibilities and Base-line Teaching Load by Appointment

All full-time faculty are expected to have a 100% workload. Each type of appointment carries a distinct base-line workload distribution and teaching load that reflects the responsibilities and performance expectations for faculty members at that rank. Variations from base-line distributions of workload and teaching load are possible (see section3).

Jointly appointed faculty members carry a primary obligation to their tenure-home unit and a secondary obligation to the non-tenure unit. The distribution of workload for jointly appointed faculty members is proportional to the percentage of the appointment. Unit heads and the Dean must clearly define expectations in each unit to ensure that jointly appointed faculty have a 100% workload.

Full-time faculty with a 50% or more administrative load (e.g., Department Unit Head or Associate Dean) are not covered in these guidelines.

2.1. Tenure-Track Faculty (Assistant Professors and Associate Professors without Tenure).

Tenure-track faculty hold appointments as untenured, probationary members of the faculty.

- Base-line teaching load for Tenure-track faculty members is 4 courses per academic year. In combination with the other teaching expectations (see 1.2) this fulfills approximately 40% of their workload.
- Tenure-track faculty members are expected to engage in research, scholarship, or creative activity in fulfillment of approximately 50% of their workload.
- Tenure-track faculty members are expected to engage in service activities in fulfillment of approximately 10% of their workload.

2.2 Tenured Faculty (Associate or Full Professor with Tenure). Tenured faculty members hold appointments with continuous tenure as members of the faculty. They are expected to be research active.

- Base-line teaching load for research active tenured faculty members is 4 courses per academic year. In combination with the other teaching expectations (see 1.2) this fulfills approximately 40% of their workload.
- Tenured faculty members are expected to engage in research, scholarship, or creative activity in fulfillment of approximately 40% of their workload.
- Tenured faculty members are expected to engage in service activities in fulfillment of approximately 20% of their workload.

2.2.1 Research Inactive Tenured Faculty. A tenured faculty member will be considered research inactive if the faculty member does not meet expectations for being research active (see 1.1) in any of the previous 3 calendar years in accordance with the process described below (see 2.2.1.1).

- Tenured faculty members who are research-inactive will teach 6 courses per academic year. In combination with the other teaching expectations (see 1.2) this fulfills approximately 80% of their workload.
- Tenured faculty members who are determined to be research-inactive are expected to engage in service and professional development activities in fulfillment of approximately 20% of their workload.

2.2.1.1 Determining Research Inactivity

- At the time of the annual Merit Review the Department Chair will review the research materials submitted by each tenured faculty member to determine if any faculty member was research inactive in the previous calendar year. If the Department Chair determines that a faculty member has been research inactive the Department Chair will notify the faculty member of this determination. If the Department Chair determines that a faculty member has been research inactive for two consecutive calendar years the Department Chair will ask the Department Executive Committee (excluding the faculty member under consideration) to review the Department Chair's determination. If a majority of the Committee concurs with the Department Chair's determination, the Department Chair will notify the faculty member that one more year of research inactivity will result in the faculty member being considered research inactive and that the faculty member's workload will be modified accordingly. If at the end of the calendar year the Department Chair and a majority of the Executive Committee (excluding the faculty member under consideration) both determine that the faculty member has been research inactive for a third consecutive calendar year the Department Chair will request to the CSSH Dean that the faculty member be considered research inactive and that the faculty member's workload be modified accordingly. If the Dean concurs that the faculty member is workload inactive the faculty member will be notified of this and of the associated

workload modification prior to receiving a contract for the next academic year.

- Research inactive faculty who wish to be considered once again research active can request this at the point of annual merit review. If either the Department Chair or a majority of the Executive Committee (excluding the faculty member under consideration) determine that the faculty member was research active in the previous calendar year the Department Chair will request to the CSSH Dean that the faculty member be considered research active beginning the next academic year. If the Dean concurs with the Department determination the faculty member will be notified of this and of the associated workload modification prior to the next academic year.

2.3 Full-time Non-Tenure-Track Teaching Professors (Assistant/Associate/Full Teaching Professor).

Full-time non-tenure-track teaching professors hold contractual, continuing term appointments as members of the Teaching Faculty.

- Base-line teaching load for teaching professors is 6 courses per academic year. In combination with the other teaching expectations (see 1.2) this fulfills approximately 80% of their workload.
- Teaching professors are expected to engage in service and professional development activities in fulfillment of approximately 20% of their workload. Research is considered faculty development for teaching professors and can constitute up to half of their service and professional development activities.

3. Variations in Workload and Appeal Process

Variance in workload from base-line expectations will be addressed on a case-by-case basis in consultation with the Department Chair and with the CSSH Dean or designate.

For faculty with joint appointments, unit heads will meet with the faculty member to coordinate any changes in workload expectations from the previous year. The approval of the Dean will be required for any modifications to a faculty member's workload.

Any changes in workload expectations, including number of courses taught, will be communicated to the faculty member prior to their receipt of the next academic year's contract.

3.1 Common Modifications in Teaching Load. Typical modifications in teaching load include those granted by parental teaching relief, contractual course reductions, family- and medical-related leaves, grant-funded buyouts, and modifications to load related to administrative duties.

3.2 Extraordinary Teaching and Service Modification. Faculty who engage in extraordinary amounts of teaching and/or service – i.e. teaching and/or service that significantly exceeds workload expectations, such as teaching large amounts of independent studies or chairing multiple demanding committees - while also meeting all other workload expectations for 4 semesters over a 6 semester period can request a course reduction for the following academic year.

3.3 Service Inactive Workload Modification. Faculty who fail to perform the minimum expected amounts of service or professional development for 2 consecutive years will be required to teach an additional course the following academic year.

3.3.1 Determining Service Inactivity. At the time of the annual Merit Review the Department Chair will review the service record of each faculty member to determine if any faculty member has failed to meet the minimum standards for service as described in 1.3, 2.1 and 2.2. If the Department Chair determines that a faculty member has not done the minimum amount of service, the Chair will notify the faculty member of this determination. If the Department Chair determines that a faculty member has failed to do the minimum expected service for two consecutive calendar years the Department Chair will ask the Department Executive Committee (excluding the faculty member under consideration) to review the Department Chair's determination. If a majority of the Committee concurs with the Department Chair's determination, the Department Chair will request to the CSSH Dean that the faculty member be required to teach an additional course the following academic year. If the Dean concurs the faculty member will be notified of this and of the associated workload modification prior to receiving a contract for the next academic year.

3.4 Overloads. Teaching courses beyond the base load for additional compensation is possible. Overload activities can occur only after 100% workload assignment is met. Any requests for overload teaching must be approved by the Department Chair and the CSSH Dean.

3.5 Grievance Process. Faculty with concerns about their workload should first address them with the Department Chair. If a faculty member is concerned about a workload assignment and cannot resolve the concern with the Department Chair, the faculty member may appeal the assignment to the CSSH Dean. If the faculty member continues to have unresolved concerns after the Dean has made a determination on the appeal, the faculty member should consult the Grievance Process as specified in the Faculty Handbook.

3.6 Policy Availability and Review. This policy will be made available to all full time faculty members of the Department, both online on the Department's SharePoint in the Governance Documents folder and in the Department office, as well as on the Office of the Provost's website. The Department will review the policy every five years. Any changes to the policy proposed on review must be approved by the Department, the Dean, and the Provost.

Checklist for Unit Workload Policy Documents

Each unit's chair and dean should initial each point on the checklist. By doing so, they attest that the full-time faculty workload policy document satisfies each of these requirements.

Name of Unit: Philosophy & Religion

Name of Chair: Rory Smead

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

Action/Approval	Date
Department Approval	October 2024
Dean Approval	February 21, 2026
Sent to Provost	February 23, 2026
Provost Approval	March 16, 2026

