



**Northeastern University, College of Science
Department of Biology Full-time T/TT and NTT Faculty Workload Policy
February 2026**

Date of approval by the Department: 2/19/2026

Date of approval of the Dean: 6/26/2026

Date of Provost's approval: 7/13/2026

The 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 Northeastern University. To this end, dedicated efforts to promote both a deep understanding of biological principles and innovative advances in the life sciences and biomedicine are essential to addressing the major challenges 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 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 of Biology annual workload performance (merit) review of that faculty member. Each faculty member is encouraged to highlight in her/his Annual Performance Self Report specific aspects of her/his activities or performance in teaching, research, and/or service that she/he feels are critical to the assessment of that faculty member's workload structure. The Department of Biology Executive Committee will consider, for example, overall class size (total enrollments) and course level (undergraduate versus graduate teaching) in addition to other key metrics covered in the Department of Biology Annual Performance Self Report. Temporary adjustments to workload for a given faculty member may occur in accordance with University and Faculty Handbook Policies on sabbaticals, leaves of absence, 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 of Biology Executive Committee or Chair. If a faculty member disagrees with the workload recommendations made by the Department of Biology Executive Committee, that faculty member has the option to file an appeal for consideration by the Department of Biology Merit Evaluation and Workload Appeals Committee, which 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 from 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 Performance 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 and NTT 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 Associate and Full Teaching Professors are expected to attend and participate in all Teaching Professor Promotion Committee (TPPC) review meetings when called; and all Full Teaching Professors are expected to attend and participate in all Full Teaching Professor Promotion Committee (FTTPC) review meetings when called. All T/TT and NTT 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 NTT and 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).

The Department of Biology Executive Committee will review the Department of Biology Full-time T/TT and NTT 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 with written request to the Department Chair. The policy document will also be made freely available to any faculty member by written request through the Department of Biology's 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:

1. Five units of teaching (one 4-SH course or equivalent = one unit) and 1 unit of service per academic year; The unit of service includes engagement in faculty meetings and departmental activities plus other service contributions such as peer teaching evaluations, preparation of letters of recommendation, student mentoring (e.g., faculty advisor for student organizations, mentor for directed study or PEAK award, TA supervision), participation as members of faculty and staff search committees, participation as members of department, college and university committees, etc.
2. BIOL2309-*Biology Project Lab* courses will count as 1.25 units of teaching.
3. Large enrollment courses (>125 students/section) will count as 1.25 units of teaching.
4. 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 exceptions, 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 review by the Executive Committee and Department Chair occurs after merit evaluations each Spring Semester during the merit review process.

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 Majors:

For NTT faculty appointed in shared departmental majors (e.g., Biochemistry, Behavioral Neuroscience), annual workload structure will be determined by the Director of that shared major in conjunction with input from the Chairs of the departments which jointly manage that major (e.g., Biochemistry: Chairs of the Biology and the Chemistry & Chemical Biology Departments; Behavioral Neuroscience: Chairs of the Biology and the Psychology Departments). The annual workload structure for these Directors, who are appointed by the Dean of the College of Science, will be determined by the Chairs of the departments that jointly manage each shared major.

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 workload adjustments will be conducted by the tenure-home department or unit in conjunction with the Chair of the Department of Biology (in consultation with the Department of Biology 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 of Biology 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 Of Biology 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 of Biology Annual Performance Self Report metrics for these activities that fall outside of standard teaching workload expectations. The Department of Biology 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 as described in their recruitment agreement.

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 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 the workload distribution in the next academic year (e.g., shifting from Structure 3 to Structure 2) following receipt of formal award notification from the funding agency; the annual review/renewal four-year projection will then begin at that time under the new workload structure.

⁵ All tenured faculty members have the option to “buy out” of teaching one course per academic year; however, they must still teach at least one course per academic year if they choose the buy-out option.

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

- Department of Biology Associate Chair
- Department of Biology Graduate Program Coordinator
- Department of Biology Director of Undergraduate Studies
- Director of a shared major (e.g., Biochemistry, Behavioral Neuroscience)
- Academic Operations Manager
- Head Faculty Advisor
- Principal Investigator or Co-Principal Investigator on a major external educational or teaching award (e.g., NSF-REU, HHMI, NIH, etc.)

Final decisions on whether a proposed activity qualifies are made through evaluation from the Executive Committee and the Department Chair.

⁷It is recognized that for tenured faculty members without active research laboratories (see workload Structure 3), opportunities exist to maintain scholarship and creative pursuits. All tenured faculty members with Workload Structure 3 are strongly encouraged to remain engaged in a wide range of scholarly activities that contribute to the overall mission of the Department of Biology, the College of Science, and Northeastern University. Therefore, research and scholarship activities that result in an accumulation scholarly activities (scholarly reviews, book chapters, book publishing, poster presentations, oral presentations at meetings – and other activities included in the “Scholarship” section of the Department Annual Report form), 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. Scholarly accolades can be accumulated over a maximum three-year period for a one-time one-unit reduction in teaching or service workload.

- Because scholarly activity is difficult to quantify numerically, the Department of Biology Executive Committee, along with the Chair, will reflect the accrued scholarly activity by the tenured Biology faculty in review compared to active research laboratories to determine if a sufficient number of scholarly works have been completed.