

T/TT Faculty Load Profile

The faculty load profile is important to address the teaching and service needs of the school, to ensure competitiveness with top tier engineering schools, and to provide flexibility and incentives to faculty to continue enhancing research quality and impact.

We have long had a quantifiable policy: three three-unit courses per year constitutes a 40% teaching load profile, and a typical service component consists of 20% time commitment. A number of measures define the high-quality aspects of research, which is the remaining 40% default faculty load.

Expectations

Measuring our education and research against the best engineering schools requires setting expectations:

On the teaching front, we have a strong commitment to first-class instruction in content, delivery and creativity at *both* the undergraduate and graduate levels. On average, we expect each one of our faculty members to regularly teach both undergraduate and graduate courses and to teach these well following, in particular, the newest available technology. The increasing quality of our undergraduates has made it attractive, but also necessary, that our TT faculty are closely involved with their teaching. The on-going effort to create a professional MS program, uncoupled from the PhD program, creates a clearer focus for these two components of our educational graduate program.

On the research front, attempts to quantify metrics of high-quality research sometimes look to effort (e.g., number of publications and number of proposals submitted), and sometimes look to measures of quality or impact (e.g., the number of times publications have been cited, quality of journal publications, evaluations of proposals, number and prestige of awards, medals or fellowships received by one's peers, etc.). In all these endeavors, we strongly value high-quality research, appropriately measured. However, the output of a research school is not just its publications; equally important are its graduates. We need to continue to work to improve our competitiveness in attracting the best PhD students in the world. This requires attractive multi-year financial support packages and makes it a basic expectation for our faculty that they are engaged in funded research that supports graduate students. A new, emerging, component of innovation and entrepreneurship, while it has yet to be formally recognized as a related component, will be the subject of near-term consideration, in collaboration with the faculty and the Provost's office.

The basic goal for PhD support in the Viterbi School is to offer, on average, one year of unrestricted fellowship support to every PhD student, one year of 50% TA support, and three years of 50% RA support. Our expectations are that faculty provide this RA support through funds external to the School, and that on average, each faculty member graduate one PhD student per year. The importance of attracting and working with the very best students is the driving idea behind the faculty load profile.

The following faculty load profile is based on the expectations outlined above. If a faculty member has difficulty meeting these expectations, individual faculty development plans will be developed, as described in the memo to the faculty of March 19, 2009 by then-Provost Nikias and then-Academic Senate President Mike Nichol. Such development plans take into consideration satisfactory performance in both research and teaching as rated by faculty merit committees. The policy on individual development plans helps members of our faculty meet our expectations.

For faculty in departments in which the curriculum is based on three-unit courses, teaching profiles will be based on units taught rather than on the number of courses and will be defined as follows:

For Tenured Faculty

1. One teaching profile is to mentor as the Thesis advisor zero or one 50% Viterbi PhD student RA, supported through extramural funding, and to teach 9 units.
2. A teaching profile that is consistent with our model for attracting and supporting top PhD students is to mentor as the Thesis advisor two or more Viterbi PhD students as 50% RAs, supported through extramural funding, and to teach 8 units.

In addition, mentoring as the Thesis advisor of one or more Viterbi PhD students through graduation, who were supported for two or more years through extramural funding, is recognized as equivalent to one total additional unit of teaching credit.

The work profile can be adjusted for devoting effort to extramurally funded research and correspondingly reducing the teaching effort. In this case, 8.33% of academic-year time devoted to extramurally funded research justifies one unit lowering of the teaching effort. Units taught in addition to these formulae will be credited towards a future year's teaching load.

Finally, one unit of teaching credit can be awarded at the discretion of the cognizant Vice Dean, upon recommendation by the Department Chair, for new course development. As guidance to the Chair, it might be anticipated that for new graduate courses, ordinary faculty development might lead us to expect that a faculty member would introduce a new course about once every six years, on average. For undergraduate courses, proposed new courses should have the support of the department curriculum committee. In either case, we will strive to keep the total number of courses offered each year constant. In other words, this is intended to refresh the curriculum periodically, rather than cause course proliferation. A request to receive this credit is to be made in writing to the Dean's Office by the Department Chair during the academic year prior to that in which the course will be taught.

For TT Assistant Professors

This part went into effect with the memo of January 17, 2012 entitled “Extended Teaching Load Reduction for Assistant Professors.”

The default teaching load for Assistant Professors will be a one course-equivalent during the first year on the tenure-track, two course-equivalents in years two and three, the equivalent of eight units each in years four through six, and the standard teaching load following year six. The reduced teaching load of two course-equivalents will continue in years four and five for junior faculty active in building their research program, which includes seeking and obtaining extramural funding, and supervising and supporting Ph.D. students. If, in years four through six, the load policy for tenured faculty outlined above results in a lighter teaching load, that model will apply. As in the past, tenure-track Assistant Professors are expected to have only limited service responsibilities, so that the time made available can be used to further their research. The new course development provision cited above does not apply to TT Assistant Professors.

For faculty in departments in which the curriculum is based on a four-unit course model, the expectations expressed above in terms of RA support are unchanged, but the teaching load is now assigned in terms of the number of courses.

For Tenured Faculty

The teaching load for tenured faculty in these departments is simply two (4-unit) courses per year. In each of these courses we expect faculty to have contact with students for four x 50 minutes per week. This does not include office hours. Teaching two such courses will be defined to constitute 40% of the faculty member’s effort for the academic year.

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Any credits accumulated during the previous policy may still be used either to reduce the teaching load or to reduce the cost of buying out of a course.

For TT Assistant Professors

TT Assistant Professors will be required to teach 9 courses (4 units each) during the first six years of their appointment. The default teaching assignment for the first year is one course.

***Disclaimer:** This policy is subject to change in the future at the School's discretion, and as per standard policy, the Dean may make individual exceptions.*