

FINAL FACULTY WORKLOAD TASK FORCE DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS
Metropolitan State University Denver Faculty Workload Task Force
~~November 15, 2021~~ March 15, 2022

The Faculty Workload Task Force recommends that the University adopt a strategy involving two components in an effort to rebalance faculty workloads. One component focuses on a reduction of the default teaching load for full-time faculty, to be implemented as soon as fiscally possible, to address the longstanding and growing issue of unsustainable faculty workloads. The Task Force white paper focuses on this component of the proposal, as it most directly meets our original charge. A second component involves the development of a differentiated faculty workload model, working from the baseline of the reduced workload.

Component I: Reduction to the default standard teaching load for full-time faculty

In order to make faculty workloads more manageable, the default standard average teaching load for full-time faculty will be reduced by six credits per year. Tenured/tenure-track (Category I) faculty will move from a 24-credit standard annual teaching load to an 18-credit load. Lecturers and Senior Lecturers (Category II faculty¹) will move from a 30-credit standard annual teaching load to a 24-credit load. The purpose of this adjustment is to acknowledge the work that faculty are already doing outside of formal teaching, and to make the size of the overall faculty workload more reasonable. The accompanying document (Faculty Workload Task Force White Paper) provides a discussion of the background, benefits, and considerations related to this proposal to reduce assigned teaching loads. The Task Force was charged with developing a general proposal, not providing a detailed analysis of implementation steps or finances. Nonetheless, the Task Force acknowledges that implementation of this component may require significant financial investment on the part of the University.

Tenured/tenure-track Faculty

- The default teaching load for tenured/tenure-track faculty will be an average of 18 credits per academic year.
- Scholarship and service expectations will not be increased for faculty as result of moving to the new default teaching load.
- All tenured/tenure-track faculty will continue to engage in teaching, scholarly activities, and service.
- As is currently the case, adjustments to the default teaching load may be negotiated on an individual basis. Additionally, current methods of accommodating standard teaching loads that do not add up to exactly 18 credits annually will be retained (i.e., due to teaching 4-credit courses, etc.).

Lecturers and Senior Lecturers

¹ [The Task Force recognizes that there are many different types of Category II faculty identified in the Faculty Employment Handbook, including Lecturers/Senior Lecturers, Visiting Faculty, FRIP Lecturers, Clinical Faculty, Research Faculty, and Professional/Artist/Executive in Residence. Of these types, only Lecturers and Senior Lecturers are specified as having a 5/5 teaching load. The other categories of Category II faculty have a teaching load less than 5/5. For this reason, the Task Force has opted to apply these recommendations only to the Lecturers and Senior Lecturers.](#)

- The default teaching load for Lecturers and Senior Lecturers will be an average of 24 credits per academic year.
- Job descriptions and Department Evaluation Guidelines will be modified as needed to reflect the variability in Lecturer and Senior Lecturer assignments [with respect to service and/or scholarship expectations](#).
- As is currently the case, adjustments to the default teaching load may be negotiated on an individual basis. Additionally, current methods of accommodating standard teaching loads that do not add up to exactly 24 credits annually will be retained (i.e., due to teaching 4-credit courses, etc.).

Component II: Development of a Differentiated Workload Model for full-time faculty

Recently, Provost Tatum has articulated a vision of an increased research footprint for MSU Denver as a strategy to elevate the profile of the University and to better serve our students. In the Spring 2021 survey conducted by the Task Force to assess faculty perceptions of a reduced teaching load, many faculty members expressed a desire for the opportunity to engage in scholarship to a greater extent. At the same time, some faculty members expressed a desire to maintain a greater focus on teaching.

In order to best accommodate these diverse goals *within the context of an overall reduction in workload*, the Task Force recommends ~~that the university~~ [development of](#) differentiated workload models for full-time faculty. A differentiated model ~~would~~ [provide](#)s options for adjustments from the revised standard average teaching loads [described in Component I above](#). [Departments would develop workload models specific to their disciplines and programs \(including graduate programs\), whereby department guidelines are revised following the process outlined in the Faculty Handbook \(section II, D.\). The accompanying white paper contains example differentiated models for Category I and Category II faculty.](#) [For example, for tenured/tenure track faculty, one possibility would be to consider a model with three workload options:](#)

~~1. Teaching-centered: This option would allow tenure line faculty to carry more than an 18 credit teaching load with scholarship and service requirements reduced relative to current expectations. This model would reflect a workload distribution of 70-80% Teaching, with the remaining 20-30% of the workload distributed between Scholarship and Service.~~

~~2. Balanced: This option would allow tenure line faculty to carry an 18 credit teaching load with current scholarship and service requirements. This model would reflect a workload distribution of 60% Teaching, with the remaining 40% of the workload distributed between Scholarship and Service.~~

~~3. Scholarship or Service-centered: This option would allow tenure line faculty to carry less than an 18 credit teaching load with scholarship and/or service requirements increased relative to current expectations. This model would reflect a workload distribution of 40-50% Teaching, with the remaining 50-60% of the workload distributed between Scholarship and Service.~~

Commented [KG1]: The sample model has been moved to the white paper.

General Considerations

- [The Task Force recommends that Category I and Category II faculty employed at the time of implementation be provided with the opportunity to opt out of the new workload model. These faculty would continue to be evaluated according to existing Handbook and Department](#)

Evaluation Guideline language. Any incoming faculty employed after implementation would be brought in under the new Handbook and Department Evaluation Guideline language.

- The Task Force recommends that the University begin implementation of these changes to the workload model in spring 2023. However, while the initial steps will begin in spring 2023, we recognize that complete implementation of the proposal may require multiple years. The Task Force encourages the University to clearly and transparently commit to full implementation of these proposals regardless of how much time it will take.
- The two components of this proposal (reduced teaching load and differentiated workload) could be implemented sequentially (reduced teaching load first, and then differentiated workload) or simultaneously depending on the specific circumstances within the College/School. Deans will determine which implementation strategy is most appropriate for their academic unit, in collaboration with Chairs and faculty.
- The Task Force acknowledges that a differentiated workload model will require major revisions of the Faculty Employment Handbook and the Department Evaluation Guidelines, as well as the development of policies and procedures regulating how and when faculty select their pathway. The Deans, Council of Chairs and Directors (in collaboration with department faculty), the Office of Faculty Affairs, and Faculty Senate will collaborate on the development of these new controlling documents. The Task Force emphasizes that all revisions and new developments should follow best practices of meaningful shared governance, inclusivity, and transparency.
- Implementation will not alter the university's commitment to its CHP targets, i.e., that full time faculty provide 60% of overall CHP, with 40% provided by part time faculty. Similarly, the Task Force is not suggesting changes to current Faculty Employment Handbook (section III.B) recommendations for full-time faculty deployment (i.e., a minimum of 80% Category I faculty, and a maximum of 20% Category II faculty). The Task Force recognizes that tenure-line faculty are central to achieving the mission of the University. We recommend that the University retains the commitment to hiring and supporting tenure-line faculty. Other instructional requirements related to program accreditation will also be maintained.
- Salaries for full-time (1.0 FTE) faculty will not be affected by the change in average teaching load. Salaries for faculty serving in positions of less than 1.0 FTE will be adjusted as appropriate.

Likely implications:

The Task Force recognizes that implementation of these recommendations will occur in a broader university context that includes separate (but related) discussions on issues that could impact faculty workloads. Therefore, we provide the following auxiliary recommendations:

1. In implementing this proposal, it is likely that Deans, working with their Department Chairs, will conduct an internal analysis of current curriculum and course rotations to identify opportunities to maximize efficiencies.
 - The Task Force recognizes that implementation of a reduced teaching load and a differentiated workload may impact average class sizes. As such, any changes to average class sizes must consider and protect the pedagogical integrity of the curriculum.
 - The Task Force recommends that any potential impacts to staff and administrators be accounted for as implementation plans are developed.

2. It is also likely that Deans, working with their Department Chairs, will review current reassigned time practices to ensure necessity, consistency and transparency of reassigned time allocations.
 - The Task Force recommends that any changes to reassigned time do not undermine the support needed for the growth of our academic programs, that such changes promote balanced faculty workloads, and that any changes are in line with Departmental needs.
3. As part of separate, ongoing discussions, Deans, working with their Department Chairs, may be reviewing current department scholarship guidelines to determine if they are at an appropriate level. This is already occurring in some Schools/Colleges.
 - The Task Force ~~does not recommend~~strongly cautions against increasing scholarship requirements for tenured/tenure-track faculty as result of moving to the new default teaching load. This component of the proposal aims to reduce faculty workload, not shift it.
 - The Task Force recommends that any Department Guidelines already undergoing revision as part of normal updates -- based on current workload expectations -- may be modified as deemed appropriate by the Department.
 - The differentiated workload models developed by departments (i.e., component II of this proposal) may include a high scholarship option and associated reduced expectations in other workload areas.
4. Workload equity is an important issue not directly addressed in the two components of this proposal. Thus, in the development of the differentiated workload model, it is critical that special attention be given to ways to improve workload equity, as outlined in the Task Force white paper.