

## Report of the Rutgers AAUP/AFT Ad Hoc Committee on Workload and Budget Crisis Response

May 1, 2009

Various departments and schools at Rutgers are currently engaged in developing faculty workload policies. To aid in this process, the Rutgers Council of AAUP/AFT Chapters established the present Committee, the members of which are listed at the conclusion of this report. The Committee assembled and reviewed information concerning workload policy from a variety of sources. Especially useful was the 1994 report of a University-wide Committee on Faculty Workload, chaired by Professor Lisa C. Klein. That committee included distinguished faculty members from each of the three campuses, fifteen in all, as well as Christine M. Haska, Vice President for Institutional Research and Planning, and Rodney T. Hartnett, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs.<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, it appears that the issue of faculty workload tends to attract attention during times of crisis, only to fade from view when the crisis has passed. Although the Report was submitted to the University Senate for consideration at that time, no action was taken. As will become clear below, we endorse the central conclusions of that Report.

We also reviewed workload policies from the Villanova School of Business<sup>2</sup> and from the following five Rutgers departments and units:

- (1) College of Nursing<sup>3</sup>
- (2) Faculty of Arts and Sciences - Camden<sup>4</sup>
- (3) School of Business, Department of Accounting, Business Ethics and Information Systems<sup>5</sup>
- (4) School of Business, Department of Finance and Economics<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Report of the Rutgers Faculty Workload Committee, May 1994 (hereafter “1994 Rutgers Workload Committee Report”).

<sup>2</sup> Dean James M. Danko, Statement of Direction: Faculty Development and Academic Excellence, Villanova Business School, October 2008 (hereafter “Villanova Business School Policy”).

<sup>3</sup> Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, College of Nursing, Faculty Workload Policy, n.d. (hereafter “College of Nursing Workload Policy”).

<sup>4</sup> Faculty of Arts and Sciences - Camden, Faculty Workload Policy, Sept. 15, 2008 (hereafter “FAS-Camden Workload Policy”).

<sup>5</sup> ABEIS Workload Management Guidelines – First Draft, n.d. (hereafter “ABEIS Workload Policy”).

<sup>6</sup> Report of the Committee on Faculty Workloads, Department of Finance and Economics, Rutgers Business School (voted by department, Feb. 10, 2009) (hereafter “Finance & Economics Workload Policy”).

(5) School of Business, Department of Management and Global Business<sup>7</sup>

Our report is organized in six sections: (1) Summary of Recommendations and Conclusions; (2) Basic Principles; (3) Workload Policy as a Budget Reduction Strategy; (4) The Process of Developing Workload Policy; (5) The Substance of Workload Policies; (6) The Process for Determining Individual Work Loads.

## **1. Summary of Recommendations and Conclusions**

***Faculty productivity is, first and foremost, the responsibility of the faculty itself.*** It is expected that all full-time faculty will perform a full-time workload. The appropriate goal for a faculty workload policy is to ensure that each faculty member is carrying an equitable combined load of teaching, research and service. (*See Part 2.*)

***Faculty workload policy should not be viewed as a means of responding to the budget crisis.*** Given that the overwhelming majority of Rutgers faculty already work long hours at a high rate of productivity, there is no reason to expect that an equitable workload policy will result in increased output. The University may not unilaterally impose an overall increase in workload requirements without first bargaining with the Union over the appropriate compensation. (*See Part 3.*)

***Faculty workload policies should be developed at the departmental level using accepted procedures of faculty governance*** including the adoption of proposed policies by faculty vote with approval by the Dean. (*See Part 4.*)

***In general, voluntary workload policies are preferable to mandatory.*** An increased teaching load that results from a voluntary shift in a faculty member's professional commitments is far more likely to yield high quality teaching than an increased load imposed as a penalty for low scholarly production. It would be a serious mistake to impose mandatory requirements on an entire department because of a problem with one or two faculty members. In the event that a mandatory policy is nevertheless deemed necessary, a number of best practices are suggested. (*See Part 5.*)

***Because of the wide variation in the forms and assessment of scholarship, teaching, and service across disciplines, individual faculty workloads should be negotiated at the departmental level.*** There should be full participation by an appropriate faculty committee or committees, and the department's authority to vary workloads must have the unequivocal support of the dean and the administration. The individual workload assignments of each faculty member on a given track (e.g., tenure track) should be disclosed to all members of the faculty on that track in that department. Finally, there should be some avenue of individual appeal. (*See Part 6.*)

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<sup>7</sup> Department of Management and Global Business, Faculty Workload, Jan. 12, 2009 (hereafter "Management & GB Workload Policy").

## 2. Basic Principles

We begin by stating three basic principles that appear to be matters of consensus. First, faculty productivity is, first and foremost, the responsibility of the faculty itself. As the 1994 Faculty Workload Committee explained:

As faculty members, we claim that our work requires autonomy and freedom. We must acknowledge that this autonomy demands responsibility and accountability. It is important that faculty members not ignore indifferent commitment from any colleague on the assumption that ‘the administration’ is responsible for monitoring faculty behavior. Only the faculty can govern its own behavior adequately. We each have an obligation to demand conscientious effort from one another. Our work at Rutgers University, for our students and for the public, allows no less.<sup>8</sup>

Second, whatever the balance of teaching, scholarship, and service, “the expectation is that all full-time faculty will perform a full-time work load.”<sup>9</sup>

Third, the goal of workload policies is “ensuring that all faculty are engaging in an equitable combined load of teaching, research and service.”<sup>10</sup>

## 3. Workload Policy as a Budget Reduction Strategy

Some Deans have been promoting the development of workload policies as a means of increasing overall teaching output. For example, a working group of the New Brunswick Deans Council has proposed the adoption of new workload policies not as part of an effort to achieve academic excellence, but as a “budget reduction strategy” alongside proposals to freeze wages and impose furloughs:

Academic deans should work with department chairs and the faculty to examine faculty workload policies with an eye toward ensuring that all faculty are engaging in an equitable combined load of teaching, research and service. For example, a policy might specify that a faculty member with limited research activity is expected to take on additional teaching. Chairs and deans should use differential workloads to ensure that members of the faculty who are no longer meeting expectations for research or service increase their teaching efforts.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> 1994 Workload Report, p. 10; *see also* Villanova Business School Policy, p. 3: “[I]t is the faculty itself which is best qualified to drive the faculty development that leads to an environment of academic excellence.” (Emphasis in original).

<sup>9</sup> Memorandum of Philip Furmanski to New Brunswick Deans *re Faculty Workload*, July 23, 2008, p. 1.

<sup>10</sup> New Brunswick Deans’ Council, Report of the Working Group on Budget Reduction Strategies, March 2009, p. 3 (hereafter “N.B. Deans Budget Reduction Report”).

<sup>11</sup> N.B. Deans Budget Reduction Report, p. 3. Wage freezes and furloughs are proposed at p. 5.

We believe that this proposal dangerously conflates two distinct – and potentially contradictory – objectives: (1) ensuring “an equitable combined load of teaching, research and service” and (2) increasing teaching output as a means of responding to the funding crisis. We wholeheartedly approve the first, but have serious reservations about the second, especially if it is not combined with a forthright recognition that any such increase would almost certainly result in decreased scholarly or service output. The available evidence indicates that the faculty of Rutgers University is, on the whole, hard-working and highly productive. A survey conducted in 1994 by the Office of Institutional Research reported that the average Rutgers faculty member works 58-60 hours per week.<sup>12</sup> Given this level of effort, there would appear to be at least as many faculty members working far above expectations as there are beneath. Increasing overall teaching output would inevitably decrease scholarly and service output. In any particular case, an “equitable combined load” might involve either an increase or a decrease in teaching load. Thus, for example, the FAS-Camden Workload Policy appropriately provides not only for increasing the teaching loads of faculty who are “not scholarly productive,” but also for decreasing the teaching loads of faculty who are “regularly productive” in scholarship.<sup>13</sup>

We draw a sharp distinction between voluntary and required changes in workload. During a funding crisis, there is a natural tendency for faculty to pull together in order to accomplish the University’s missions despite reduced resources. One way of doing this is to increase the intensity of our labor without demanding increased compensation. Already, many faculty members are teaching larger classes, doing without teaching assistants previously assigned, and performing work previously done by laid-off staff members. It is another thing altogether, however, to increase expectations of overall output. To the extent that this becomes a consideration in developing workload policies, it will skew the balance of teaching, scholarship, and service away from an “*equitable* combined load” and toward an “*intensified* combined load.”

At that point, the issue becomes a matter for collective bargaining. The University may not unilaterally impose a general increase in workload requirements without bargaining with the Union over the appropriate compensation. Accordingly, we oppose the use of workload policies as a means of increasing faculty teaching loads.

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<sup>12</sup> Office of Institutional Research, Faculty Workload Survey, April 18, 1994, attached to the 1994 Rutgers Workload Committee Report as Appendix I, p. A-1.

<sup>13</sup> FAS-Camden Workload Policy, p. 2. The Policy provides for teaching loads of 2+2 for “regularly productive scholars,” 3+2 for “occasionally productive scholars,” and 3+3 for faculty members who are “not scholarly productive.” *Id.* The Policy was promoted as a means of *reducing* the teaching loads of productive scholars. We have no data concerning teaching loads at Camden prior to the implementation of the policy, but it appears from the subjective impressions of faculty members that the average load was 3+2. All of the policies that we reviewed, with the exception of the College of Nursing, followed this general pattern of light teaching loads for very productive scholars, medium teaching loads for somewhat productive scholars, and heavy teaching loads for less productive scholars and faculty who do not produce scholarship. The Nursing policy calls for a three-credit reduction in teaching load for each 20% portion of salary funded by grants or contracts. College of Nursing Workload Policy, p. 4.

#### 4. The Process for Developing Workload Policy

The AAUP holds that the “faculty should participate fully in the determination of workload policy, both initially and in all subsequent reappraisals.”<sup>14</sup> Previous reports on faculty workload have concluded that policies should be formulated at the department level or, where there are no departments, at the unit or institute level. (For simplicity, we will use the term departments to stand in for these possibilities.) We concur, and also conclude – in line with their general recommendations – that the departments should develop and adopt workload policies using accepted procedures of faculty governance including the adoption of proposed policies by faculty vote with approval by the Dean.

In 1990-1991, a Joint Committee on Faculty Workload, consisting of four members selected by the AAUP and four by the University Administration, “agreed that, because faculty workload is so complex, so variable, and so dynamic, academic disciplines themselves are most qualified to determine both the appropriateness and equitability of workloads for their faculty. Peers functioning within their own collegial settings and the broad parameters of their discipline nationally can best determine appropriate faculty assignments, both maximally and in detail.”<sup>15</sup> In his response to the Report, University President Francis Lawrence wrote that he was “pleased to accept the Joint Committee’s judgment concerning the process and principles to be followed in determining faculty workload” and, in particular, “its conclusions on the general principles of collegial process with disciplinary settings.”<sup>16</sup> The 1994 Rutgers Faculty Workload Committee reached the same conclusion: “The central thesis of this report is that it is the department–the faculty in aggregate–that best understands the appropriate balances between teaching, research, and service, and is best situated to articulate clearly the standards for effective teaching and scholarly accomplishment.” The Committee emphasized the importance of this principle during times of financial crisis:

It is at the level of the department that questions of resource utilization must be resolved. Under the enormous pressures of decreasing budgets and stable or growing enrollments, departments need to face squarely the question of how teaching resources are used. Departments must make the crucial decisions about the balance of teaching, research and service they wish to sustain, and whether the productivity is commensurate with the cost. We firmly believe that the university should never compromise quality for the sake of quantity. The departments must decide with their faculty when requests for increased workloads have begun to interfere with maintaining standards.”<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> AAUP Statement on Faculty Workload, 2 AAUP Policy Tenth Ed., p. 191.

<sup>15</sup> Report of the Joint Committee on Workload, July 8, 1991, p. 1.

<sup>16</sup> Francis Lawrence to Beverly H. Bowns et al., Dec. 19, 1991, p. 1.

<sup>17</sup> 1994 Rutgers Workload Committee Report, p. 4.

## 5. The Substance of Faculty Workload Policies

As noted above, a central thesis of this report is that faculty workload policy should be set at the departmental level using accepted procedures of faculty governance. It is to be expected that departmental policies may vary substantially. However, all but one of the policies that we reviewed provided for ranking faculty members at specified levels of scholarly productivity, each of which entailed a different, mandatory teaching load. For example, the FAS-Camden Workload Policy provides for teaching loads of 2+2 for “regularly productive scholars,” 3+2 for “occasionally productive scholars,” and 3+3 for faculty members who are “not scholarly productive.”<sup>18</sup> This pattern may reflect the fact that the Villanova Business School Policy, which adopts a categorical approach, was circulated as a model to the relevant decision-makers.

It is not clear to us that this type of policy will produce any improvement in the situation. In this regard, it is worth considering these observations of the Rutgers Business School Department of Finance and Economics:

The nature of the work of university faculty means that there is a non-trivial principal-agent problem to address. Requiring Professor X to teach 50% more than his/her colleagues is not going to encourage him to provide quality instruction. The extra hours might be perceived in a similar way to community service imposed by a court. The bottom line is the students may not gain from increasing Professor X’s duties by 50%. One scenario could be that Professor X is now teaching 4 classes in a tolerable manner but teaches 6 in a shoddy manner. Although it clear that her/his input measured in classroom hours has been increased by 50% output is much more difficult to measure. Indeed, on a quality adjusted basis, total output could decline. Alternatively, reducing Research Professor Y’s teaching load by 25% may indeed deprive students of the talents and skills he/she would otherwise bring to the classroom. In fact, one of the major complaints of parents who send their children to top quality institutions is that they are very often taught by TAs. Hence, on a quality adjusted basis, the students could be net losers by this rearrangement.<sup>19</sup>

On the other hand, if workload policy is administered on the basis of voluntary compliance, it is possible that “[d]ifferential teaching loads could be viewed as allowing those whose gift is teaching to devote more time to it, while allowing those whose forte is research to devote more time to that.”<sup>20</sup>

Accordingly, departments might want to consider carefully whether a policy based on voluntary compliance would better accomplish their objectives. **We believe that it would be a**

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<sup>18</sup> FAS-Camden Workload Policy, p. 2.

<sup>19</sup> Finance & Economics Workload Policy, pp. 1-2.

<sup>20</sup> *Id.*

**serious mistake to bring an entire departmental faculty under a potentially counterproductive mandatory policy because of one or two underperforming faculty members.**

In the event that a mandatory policy is required, it is possible to identify a few “best practices” that should be implemented.

First, any policy that calls for higher-than-normal teaching loads for faculty who are below par in scholarly productivity should also provide for lower-than-normal teaching loads for faculty who are above par in scholarly productivity.

Second, policies should retain flexibility to deal with individual circumstances in assigning teaching load. Categorical definitions of teaching load may fail to capture crucial aspects of an individual’s actual teaching effort. For example, where workloads are defined in terms of courses per semester, there is an inevitable lumpiness in workload assignments. If the options are 2-2, 3-2, and 3-3, then it follows that there are, in effect, three basic workload levels. However, the accounting of teaching loads must “be sensitive to the wide variety of forms of teaching – for example, independent study, supervised post-doctoral research, dissertation direction, participation in graduate examinations, and supervision of teaching assistants and part-time lecturers.”<sup>21</sup> Moreover, an individual’s actual teaching output may be influenced by numerous variables including class size, number of preparations, course development, and intensity of teaching (for example, the extent of faculty involvement in grading and providing feedback on student work).<sup>22</sup> In light of these considerations, it is entirely possible that an intensive 2-2 load could require more actual teaching effort than a 3-2 or even a low-intensity 3-3 load.

Third, policies should preserve flexibility to include service as a fully recognized factor in an individual faculty member’s workload. There is a tendency in workload discussions to focus primarily on teaching versus scholarship. In particular cases, however, the missions of the University and the department may best be served by a combined workload that emphasizes service.

Fourth, policies should preserve flexibility to deal with individual cases that do not fit the department’s ranking criteria. Hard-edged classifications based on quantitative criteria of scholarly production will miss important aspects of scholarly effort. The policies that we reviewed typically considered an individual’s scholarly output during a five-year period. But ambitious, long-term projects may not produce sufficient publications during the five-year window. It is also possible that a faculty member might produce publications that are few in number but of such quality that they contribute outstandingly both to the field and to the credit of the University. Accordingly, reliance on publications during a fixed period of time may encourage faculty to adopt counterproductive research strategies. As noted by one Business

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<sup>21</sup> 1994 Rutgers Workload Committee Report, p. 9.

<sup>22</sup> AAUP Statement on Faculty Workload, 2 AAUP Policy Tenth Ed., pp. 192-95.

School departmental committee:

[T]enured faculty who have been research-active and who would wish to reorient their research toward the examination of important and difficult issues that are riskier than the average and require a big investment in time and effort may end up being penalized with a higher teaching load if they hit a temporary dry spell or their intensive efforts do not bear fruit. This quandary may incentivize . . . faculty to forego important but risky research in favor of more incremental but safer projects. If this happens, the overall quality of research would suffer as faculty will have a clear inducement to sacrifice quality for quantity.<sup>23</sup>

Fifth, we recommend against dividing faculty members into labeled classifications or tracks. Labeled classifications, as in the FAS-Camden policy, may create or exacerbate a hierarchy of status within a department or discipline. The assignment of an individual to any of our existing classifications (Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, Professor I, and Professor II) entails an elaborate process including a comprehensive review of the individual's teaching, scholarship, and service and the solicitation of outside letters. We do not believe that a new layer of classifications is necessary or desirable.

Sixth, policies should include teaching load maximums, so that load increases cannot be used to drive faculty members to leave the University.

Seventh, faculty members who have reached the age of 70, “and who accumulated a substantial research record in their RBS careers should keep” their present loads “without being subject to minimum research requirement. They would be encouraged to sustain and strengthen on a voluntary basis their mentorship and advisory activities in research, teaching, and service within the school and the university.”<sup>24</sup>

Finally, the criteria for merit increases should be modified where necessary to reflect the changed balance of teaching, scholarship, and service. It is possible, for example, that faculty with higher teaching loads and high levels of service should be awarded the same level of merit increase as those with lower teaching loads and higher levels of scholarship.

## **6. The Process for Determining Individual Work Loads**

We suggest six “best practices” here, the first three of which were set forth in the 1994 Workload Committee Report. First, because of the wide variation in the forms and assessment of scholarship, teaching, and service across disciplines, “negotiating individual faculty member work assignments . . . must occur at the department level.”<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> ABEIS Workload Policy, p. 1.

<sup>24</sup> *Id.* at 2.

<sup>25</sup> 1994 Rutgers Workload Committee Report, p. 10.

Second, the process should include full participation by an appropriate faculty committee or committees. “Department chairs, representing the department governance structure, must be prepared to balance the current interests, abilities, and accomplishments of the faculty member, on the one hand, and the needs of the department, on the other.” These functions should be carried out “in consultation . . . with the appropriate departmental faculty committees.”<sup>26</sup> In order to avoid proliferating levels of review, departments might consider using their peer evaluation committees (meaning the committee normally used to recommend FCP awards) as a base for workload equity committees.<sup>27</sup>

Third, the department’s authority “to modify the specific mix of teaching, research and service assignments” must have the “unequivocal support of the dean and the administration.”<sup>28</sup> The policy should clearly identify the point in the process at which a decision is “final” for purposes of appeal.

Fourth, workload policies and procedures should be distributed to all covered individuals before the process begins.

Fifth, the individual workload assignments of each faculty member on a given track (e.g., tenure track) should be disclosed to all members of the faculty on that track in that department. For example, the MGB proposal calls for the distribution of individual rankings and teaching workload reductions of tenure-track faculty to all tenure-track faculty members of the department.<sup>29</sup> This feature follows from the faculty-driven character of the productivity effort. Without transparency, there will be no way for faculty members to perceive whether the assignment process is working fairly and effectively.

Sixth and finally, there should be some avenue of individual appeal. Ultimately, individual work assignments may be subject to the advisory grievance procedure under the Collective Bargaining Agreement,<sup>30</sup> but it would be sensible to have a speedier procedure in place to catch errors and deal with relatively simple issues. The Business School’s Department of Finance and Economics Policy, for example, calls for review by the Department Review Committee (DRC). This provision is noteworthy for its careful detail:

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<sup>26</sup> *Id.*

<sup>27</sup> Management & GB Workload Policy, p. 4.

<sup>28</sup> 1994 Rutgers Workload Committee Report, p. 10.

<sup>29</sup> Management & GB Workload Policy, p. 4.

<sup>30</sup> Article XV of the collective contract provides that “[i]ndividual workload assignments of members of the bargaining unit shall be consistent with the practice of their department, program, or unit,” and that “[c]laims of inconsistency with such practices by members of the bargaining unit shall be grievable as a Category Two grievance under the contract grievance procedure (Article IX).”

The individual is obligated to notify the DRC of his/her intention to seek review within 30 days of being informed in writing of the score by the Chair. Grounds for requesting a review should be based upon allegations that the scoring criteria had been improperly or inconsistently applied. This could include evidence based upon horizontal comparisons. [T]he DRC is required to render a decision within 30 days unless extended by agreement of all involved. The decisions of DRC are binding on the Chair. However, the individual may appeal the DRC's decision to Dean Cooper (DC).<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Finance & Economics Workload Policy, p. 4.