

College of Science

Faculty Workload Guidelines

08.20.2025

An initial version of these guidelines was reviewed, edited, and approved by the COS Department Heads and Directors Council (DHD) and the COS Faculty Council on 12.11.24. This revised version was approved by the DHD Council on 08.20.25 and is provided pending review and approval by the COS Faculty Council in Fall 2025.

Workload Tracking

Workload is defined as the percentage of professional time devoted to areas of assigned duties. The value given to each area should represent the percentage effort over the course of an entire academic or fiscal year, not by semester, because duties may be different in the fall and spring semesters. By August of each year, department heads and directors should submit workload assignments for each faculty member to “Manager Self Service” (MSS) via the [Workload Tool](#); faculty should review the assignments and discuss any discrepancies or misunderstandings with their department head or director prior to the start of the fall semester. As faculty members’ direct supervisor, the department head or director does have the final word in the workload assignment if discussion does not resolve a disagreement.

Areas of Effort

Faculty effort is distributed across three primary areas: teaching, research/scholarship, and service. Each section below provides a set of faculty activities that are representative of each of the three areas. These descriptions should be used to guide assignment of effort.

Teaching

Traditional or online course instruction including asynchronous or synchronous contact with students, preparation of course materials, advising/meeting with students, grading, research mentoring of undergraduate and graduate students (including service on thesis/dissertation committees), mentoring of postdoctoral fellows/scholars, supervision/instruction in clinical practica, new course development, curriculum development and assessment, and management of teaching assistants and preceptors. Teaching contributions are accountable through peer observation, student course surveys, documentation of service on student committees, documentation of student engagement, and student success metrics, as well as considerations of class size, complexity of content, course logistics, and course assessment.

Research/Scholarship

Includes the conduct of research, management of a research program, writing and submitting funding proposals, authoring peer-reviewed manuscripts and proceeding articles, and presentation of research (contributed and invited) at professional conferences, symposia, seminars, workshops, or meetings. The College of Science recognizes that contributions to long term projects, including large national projects (e.g., space missions), may require many years to come to completion and do not necessarily provide immediate science payoff. Research may also include mentoring of students and postdoctoral fellows/scholars and staff in matters that are directly related to the goals of a faculty member's research program. Research contributions are accountable through publications, conference presentations, pursuit of funding, success of acquiring funding, leadership on research projects, technology transfer, open-access products, community engaged research, and perhaps other metrics of societal impact of research results (quantity in any area should be commensurate with disciplinary norms).

Service

Includes a wide range of activities that typically serve the needs of the teaching and research missions of the university, as well as serving the broader community. Service activities often include departmental committees (e.g., admissions, directing graduate programs, promotion and tenure, DEI, curriculum, faculty searches, etc.), college committees (e.g., promotion and tenure, faculty council, post-tenure audit, sabbatical review, awards review, search committees), and university committees (promotion and tenure, search committees, faculty senate and subcommittees, etc.). Activities in this category may also include service to international/federal/state funding agencies, professional societies and scientific journals as grant reviewers, manuscript reviewers, editors, editorial board members, conference planners, office holders in professional societies, community outreach, etc. In addition, faculty activities that support departmental, college, or university infrastructure facilities or projects should be regarded as service.

Workload Templates for Faculty Tracks

This section provides templates regarding the academic or fiscal year workload distribution across teaching, research, and service for faculty on the tenure-track (TT) faculty, career-track (CT), and continuing status track (CST). The College of Science is disciplinarily diverse and recognizes that the actual activities that comprise the percentage of effort in any of the three primary categories may need to vary widely across departments, as well as across individual faculty members within a department. Please refer to the "Areas of Effort" descriptions of teaching, research, and service when interpreting the templates.

The templates described in the following sections are intended to serve as a starting point but should be considered malleable enough that they may be shaped to fit the context of individual faculty in specific departments. In all cases, a 1.0 FTE position is

assumed, and department leadership should be able to explain their distribution of faculty effort through some form of documentation.

Tenure-Track

The prototypical workload for tenure-track faculty is 40% teaching, 40% research, and 20% service – the “40/40/20” distribution. The College of Science recommends the following baseline effort distribution:

Teaching: 40% effort. The actual distribution of the teaching activities of any particular faculty member will depend on considerations of the entirety of teaching activities (see “Areas of Effort”), as well as such variables as course enrollment, new preparation, management of teaching and learning assistants, complexity of the course topic, scheduling relative to faculty research field studies, etc.

Research: 40% effort that includes a reasonable distribution of activities indicated in the “Areas of Effort” section. The actual percent effort in research of a particular faculty member will depend on considerations of the level of research activity and the balance with the teaching and service activities.

Service: 20% effort that considers internal department/college/university service as well as service to the faculty member’s respective discipline.

These percentages should be adjusted by the department head or director on an annual basis if the faculty member’s effort distribution changes due to factors such as taking on a major editorship, obtaining a large grant requiring extensive research management, course buyout, reduction in research activity and/or productivity, etc. They may also be adjusted for career stage or based on negotiated workload in a job offer letter. An increase in workload percentage in a particular area implies an increase in expectations; likewise a decreased percentage in given area implies decreased expectations. In any case, a workload distribution change can be requested by a faculty member due to new circumstances but must be approved by the department head or director; the department head or director may also initiate a workload change for a faculty member based on annual performance reviews and departmental needs.

Career Track

The career track positions within the College of Science include Instructors, Lecturers, Professors of Practice, Research Professors, and Clinical Professors where each requires a different workload distribution based on the intended goals of the position. Please refer to the “Areas of Effort” section regarding activities representative of teaching, research, and service. The College of Science baseline recommendations are indicated below for each position.

Instructors: 90% teaching effort, 10% service. The teaching load typically consists primarily of classroom, online, or laboratory teaching.

Lecturers: 80-85% teaching effort, 15-20% service. The teaching load typically consists primarily of classroom, online, or laboratory teaching, but may also include student research mentoring.

Professors of Practice: 70-80% teaching effort, 0-10% scholarship, 20% service
The workload distributions for Professors of Practice may vary widely across the college depending on how much effort is expected/allowed for scholarship based on the original position offer letter. Assignment of effort must also consider department needs and the alignment with departmental criteria for promotion.

Research Professors: 90% research, 10% service. Typically, a Research Professor is hired to conduct research that is externally funded (e.g, grants, contracts, gifts) where the workload distribution is commensurate with meeting the obligations of the funding source. Research Professors, however, may be engaged in activities that support scientific research infrastructure or facilities in which case the effort may be more appropriately assigned to service. In addition, a Research Professor may occasionally teach a course and in such an academic year, should have some percentage of effort indicated in the teaching category.

Clinical Professors: 70% teaching, 15% service, 15% clinical services. A Clinical Professor's duties usually include supervision/instruction in clinical practice, delivery of clinical services, and some classroom teaching. Clinical Professors may, in some cases, include research/scholarship activity as a component of their workload if they contribute to work on a funded grant. Assignment of effort must consider department needs and the alignment with departmental criteria for promotion.

Continuing-Status Track

The intent of the continuing-status track is to allow for creation of unique positions in which workload distributions are aligned with the specific parameters of the position itself. Such positions may be entirely research-based, entirely teaching-based, or a mix of research and teaching, but all have an expectation of some form of scholarship and some amount of service. Nearly 90% of the continuing status positions in the COS are Astronomers in Steward Observatory and the remaining 10% hold various specialized position titles in other disciplines. The College of Science baseline recommendations are indicated below for each position but vary significantly from position to position.

Astronomers – Steward Observatory: 0-20% teaching, 40% research, 40-60% service. Continuing status astronomers generally do not have teaching assignments but they may occasionally be asked to teach; in such a case, the workload percentage is discussed with and then set by the Director/Department Head (DHD). Continuing status faculty generally have a research workload assignment of approximately 40%, although this workload percentage may vary depending on the

needs of both the faculty member and the Observatory/Department. Continuing status track faculty in Steward Observatory often will have a service workload as high as 60% that includes participation on departmental and intramural university committees, contributions to the profession through national or international committees, refereeing for research or educational journals, being part of the organization of professional meetings, and engaging in formal or informal outreach either within the university or to external audiences. Importantly, service also includes responsibilities supporting the development and operation of the research facilities of Steward Observatory for general use by the students, staff, and faculty of the university. Teaching and advising performed by continuing status faculty is generally evaluated as part of their service and/or research assignments.

Specialized Position Titles: 40% teaching, 10-20% research/scholarship, 40-50% service. Faculty in these positions are typically master teachers; in addition to classroom instruction, they often play leadership roles in curriculum development and development of teaching pedagogy which can lead to published scholarship. Service includes participation on departmental and intramural university committees, contributions to the profession through national or international committees, refereeing for research or educational journals, being part of the organization of professional meetings, and engaging in formal or informal outreach either within the university or to external audiences. Service may also include roles as directors of programs focused on training students and community members, or providing services to various constituencies.

Minimum Course Enrollment Guideline

Enrollment in a course should be large enough to justify its offering in any given semester, but cancellation of an under-enrolled course should be given careful consideration based on the possible consequences for the students who are enrolled. In addition, cancellation of a course may require a reassignment of workload for the faculty member(s) who had been assigned to teach the course.

The College of Science guidelines for minimum enrollment* are:

For course numbers <500: 12 students

For course numbers that are co-convened as 400/500 level: 5 students (UG and/or Grad)

For course numbers >500: 5 students

*These are NOT absolute thresholds and can be adjusted relative to program size and other relevant context.

These guidelines do NOT apply to registrations for independent studies, research, thesis, dissertation, or any academic experience that intended to be individualized for a specific student or small group of students. In addition, the student enrollment numbers are only a

guideline; based on context, department heads may decide to move forward with a course if enrollment numbers are less than those stated.