

Fall 2019 Faculty Institute Outcomes
Coming to Agreement: Faculty Responsibilities and Roles
Pere Marquette, IL, September 13, 2019

Building on the Spring 2019 Faculty Institute, the Fall 2019 Institute brought the faculty together to develop list of faculty responsibilities and to bridge the divide between differing expectations. At the Spring Institute, we identified areas of agreement regarding specific responsibilities related to 1) teaching and advising, 2) professional development, and 3) service. We acknowledged that the faculty have primary responsibility for the curriculum and have other professional obligations to the university. The Fall 2019 Institute tackled areas of disagreement in a proactive and constructive way. Faculty members engaged in a round-robin breakout scheme (See Appendix II) and were given the opportunity to express their views and thoughts. Members of the Faculty Senate facilitated the conversation and reported out on areas of agreement.

After the institute, the Institute Planning Committee reconvened and created a document that harmonized the report-outs with existing handbook language. The committee then presented that language to the full Faculty Senate, which debated the document, slightly modified it for clarity, and passed it unanimously (see Appendix I). The Faculty Senate President will forward the document to the Office of Academic Affairs for their consideration and inclusion in the University Handbook.

Appendix I

V. Workload for Stated and Status-Track Faculty Policy Statement

Faculty appointments at Webster University entail a variety of interdependent activities; guidelines and expectations for those activities are explained below.

A. Elements of Faculty Load

Teaching and Advising: Webster faculty should demonstrate genuine excellence — not just minimal competence — in teaching, generally defined as designing and conducting classes, evaluating assignments, and conferring with students.

All faculty are expected to:

- Submit grades by the due date.
- Meet classes as officially scheduled, making up missed classes and avoiding the canceling of classes, limiting cancelations to cases of illness, scheduled holidays, etc.
- Routinely review and update curriculum and syllabi.
- Develop new curricula.
- Assess and review their academic programs.
- Use technology to enhance instruction as appropriate.

Faculty are also expected to advise and counsel students. This may include formal advising, whether of first-year advisees or departmental majors, and the more informal advising and counseling that are associated with everyday teaching duties.

Professional Development: In order to be effective, professional educators and advance the mission of Webster University, faculty are expected to remain current and credentialed in their fields. Webster University recognizes that a “one size fits all” notion of professional development is not desirable; however, professional development should be verifiable. Thus, faculty in each academic discipline/department, in collaboration with the leadership of their schools/colleges, should define and communicate:

- Professional development expectations that conform to the university handbook.
- The activities that constitute discovery, integration, application, scholarship of teaching and learning within the discipline/department.
- The relative value of different kinds of professional development/research activities.

Based on these shared expectations, faculty should assess the success of professional development/research activities completed by faculty in their department/discipline.

In addition, discipline/department faculty are expected to create an environment of mentorship, support, and encouragement for scholarship, broadly defined; each department and/or disciplinary unit should provide faculty with space, time, and resources for professional

development to the best of its ability, including advocating to the dean/administration for additional resources.

Service: Service to the university community (e.g., serving on Faculty Senate, Faculty Senate committees, university task forces, administrative searches) is an expected part of a status/status-track faculty member's load. Not only is it a requirement for initial status and continuing status as assessed by the Committee to Review Faculty, but it is also an integral component of the shared faculty governance instituted by the university as a whole. University service need not be in lieu of departmental service, and conversely departmental service is not a replacement for university service when it comes to assessing an individual with regard to initial or continuing status. Though it may not be possible for an individual faculty member to make service contributions at the university level every year, a review of an individual faculty member's activities over the course of several years should show consistent and significant university service.

B. General Guidelines for Faculty Teaching Load

In order to support teaching excellence and leave time and energy for professional development and service, a faculty member's regular course load should include no more than nine credit hours per semester, or, if teaching multiple sections of a course, no more than twelve credit hours in a semester. In no case should a faculty member be required to teach more than six different three-hour course preparations or the equivalent per academic year.

In general, equity should be maintained in teaching assignments. Factors to consider when determining equity include:

- The number of different course preparations (not just number of class hours per week).
- Additional work required to introduce a new course or substantially revise an existing course.
- Extreme differences in scope and difficulty between courses due to issues such as the need for intensive consultation with students or an unusually large amount of grading.
- Class size (though a larger size does not always make a class more difficult to teach).

Grievances regarding teaching load should be addressed to department chairs. If redress is not available from a chair, the faculty member should appeal to the Faculty Senate.

Appendix II
Fall 2019 Faculty Institute
Agenda

2:00-2:15 Registration
2:15-3:00 Plenary, opening remarks by Bill Lynch, President of the Faculty Senate

3:00-3:45 Breakout Sessions 1
Teaching/Advising
Facilitator: Lionel Cuillé
Notetaker: Terri Reilly

Professional Development
Facilitator: Jacob Lassetter
Notetaker: Kelly-Kate Pease

Service and Other Professional Obligations
Facilitator: Dani MacCartney
Notetaker: Bill Lynch

3:55-4:40 Breakout Session 2

Teaching/Advising
Facilitator: Lionel Cuillé
Notetaker: Terri Reilly

Professional Development
Facilitator: Jacob Lassetter
Notetaker: Kelly-Kate Pease

Service and Other Professional Obligations
Facilitator: Dani MacCartney
Notetaker: Bill Lynch

4:50-5:35 Breakout Session 3

Teaching/Advising
Facilitator: Lionel Cuillé
Notetaker: Terri Reilly

Professional Development
Facilitator: Jacob Lassetter
Notetaker: Kelly-Kate Pease

Service and Other Professional Obligations

Facilitator: Dani MacCartney

Notetaker: Bill Lynch

5:35-6:00 Wrap up – Session Reports: