**Interview with Department Chair**  
[ I ] - Interviewer [DC] - Department Chair

I: Good Morning! I’m Jake from the College of Computer Studies. I have my teammates here with me as well, Phoebe and Chester. Pleasure to meet you Ms. Tan! [shakes hands]

DC: Nice to meet you all. Please call me Louise. Have a seat. I’ve been informed that you intend to develop a software to assist the department in faculty loading - perhaps automate the process even?

I: Yes Ma’am. For today, we would like to know more about the process and difficulties you encounter. How much time do you have?  
  
DC: I can give you the two hours that you have requested. Let’s start.

I: Can you please describe the work that you do?

DC: Alright, so I’m the Department Chair for Software Technology. Assigning teaching load and managing course offerings are some of my responsibilities. I also handle hiring of faculty and other administrative work.

I: How long have you been in that position?

DC: 9 years

I: Oh wow. Are you also a graduate of this university?

DC: Yes. I’m a CS graduate like you.

I: Cool! Do you mind telling us about the process of assigning teaching load to faculty?

DC: For me, I need to have the list of course offerings. Based on the current list of faculty, I determine the number of units of teaching load each faculty member needs. Then I assign teaching load to full-time faculty. When there are excess load, I assign them to part-time faculty, or faculty members that can take overload.

I: How do you select the courses to be assigned to a faculty?

DC: I assign courses based on their preferences, and courses they have taught before. In extreme cases, I assign them new courses. There is a rule in the College that every faculty members should teach a new course at least once a term, if not, once a year.

I: How do you determine the courses that a faculty prefers?

DC: We ask the faculty through email or face-to-face. For new faculty, we ask them to specify the courses they prefer to teach in their application letter or during their interview.

For courses they have taught before, we used past faculty load files.

I: Is the process standardized for every department?

DC: Hmm. I can’t say for sure because I don’t know every department chair in the college or even in the university. But we do have standard rules to comply.

I: Can you explain the standard rules?

DC: For example, a full-time faculty is given 12 units of load every term, which can be teaching load, administrative load, or research load. In certain cases, a full-time faculty can carry up to 16 units max. This is called overload. The complete rules are found in the faculty manual.

I: Are all faculty members available to teach?

DC: Some faculty may not be given teaching load, and instead be assigned administrative load, or avail of research deloading, or go on leave.

I: How soon can the department chair be informed of this?

DC: The Chairs have records of faculty member’s number of years of service and administrative load assignment. For research load, we also endorse research proposals, so we have some ideas of possible deloading. Once approved, we are informed if the faculty members can already avail of research deloading.

However if there are more teaching load than the number of faculty, then we may request faculty members to postpone availing of their research deloading. We may also ask faculty members if they want to take overload.

I: So, is it possible to have this information as to which faculty is actually available for next term before you begin the process?

DC: Yes, the information should most likely be available because the Chair has the information.

I: You mentioned about deloading? What does that mean?

DC: That’s when a faculty gets less or no teaching load at all for the term in exchange for administrative load or research load.

I: How do you determine the number of deloading for a faculty?

DC: When a faculty is appointed for an administrative position, the appointment letter includes the number of deloading per term that is given to the faculty. The Chair receives a copy of this appointment letter. For example, the Dean has a deloading of 12 units per term, so this means he/she does not have to teach. The Chair can have a deloading of 6 units per term. The number of units of deloading for a Department Chair and Vice Dean are found in the Faculty Manual because it is dependent on the size of a Department.

For research deloading, the University Research Coordination Office also has a set of guidelines that specify the max number of units a faculty can avail for each research load. For example, 9 units for 1 year. This means the faculty can take 3 units research deloading per term.

I: Can we have a look at these documents (Faculty Manual and Research Guidelines)?

DC: Sure. I can tell you the relevant sections and chapters to ease your work.

I: How do you identify the courses to be offered?

DC: The list of courses per batch per specialization per program is given by the College Academic Assistant. She generates this list manually by going through each of the flowchart.

I: Are the flowcharts consistent for all batches?

DC: No they’re not. Because we normally undergo curriculum revision, we have to carefully look at which flowchart is being followed for a specific batch of students.

I: Is this also different per degree or specializations?

DC: Yes.

I: How do you identify the number of sections for each course?

DC: The College Academic Assistant also provides us with the number of students per batch, per specialization, per program. Then the Chairs estimate based on the current offerings (for chain courses) and failure rates. For example, if there are 100 freshmen who should take OBJECTP next term. We should technically open 5 sections, because OBJECTP is padded to 20. However, based on the flowchart and pre-requisites, we know that there are only 75 students taking COMPRO2 and 25 taking COMPRO1 (because of failure). So, we only open 4 sections of OBJECTP, and 1 section of COMPRO2.

I: May I request for a copy of a sample teaching load for one term?

DC: Sure.

I: What information do you need to have about the course offerings before you start the process?

DC: We normally have the course codes and number of students. We also need to know the padding, if a course is to be held in a lab, the pre-requisites. Then we start assigning schedule (days, time).

I: So one of your major considerations is the faculty’s experience. How do you know if the faculty has taught the course before? Is this in the list too?

DC: Well, I’ve been doing this for 9 years. So by now, I should know which courses have been taught by whom. I use my previous knowledge.

When there are changes in the flowchart, I ask faculty members for their preferences.

For new chairs, they refer to old faculty load file.

I: Do you keep a list of the faculty’s preferences?

DC: Not really. I do ask them of their preferences though. So I consider those when assigning.

I: Is it possible that they change their preference?

DC: Yes, they usually tell me when they request for change of teaching load or section.

I: What preferences do you take into account?

DC: Schedule. I have to remember their location because giving a 7:30am class to someone who lives far may be too troublesome for the faculty. Some of them have kids so they prefer to go home early. I also consider courses, Not necessarily the same as experience but rather interest in teaching it. This is important for new faculty. There are other queer preferences like buildings and even type of students.

I: What do you mean type of buildings /students?

DC: Some faculty like teaching first years or other tend to avoid them. That kind of preference. Faculty dislike classes in Andrew or LS. Usually it’s in Gokongwei but sometimes we service other departments.

I: What do you mean by servicing other departments?

DC: We teach courses for college of business students or even from college of science.

I: Regarding building preferences, can’t the room be re-assigned instead of re-assigning the teaching load?

DC: It depends. But that’s possible.

I: Do you consider all of this when assigning teaching load?

DC: If I can. I’ll try to accommodate these but I have to follow the university rules first before I address these preferences.

I: Is it relatively easy for you to remember their preferences?

DC: Ah. I think so.

I: How do they inform you of any preferences?

DC: They just need to tell me I guess. Some don’t have any... although that’s probably because I did not have any chance to ask them either. Usually happens when the faculty is new. But when I get the chance to talk to them, I make it a point to ask. I also use departmental meetings for this.

I: Schedule or even course to teach? Is the list complete? How is this updated or maintained? Who keeps the recent copy?

DC: Previously I use an Excel sheet and whenever there are updates, I resend the updated file to the faculty. Now, I just post this as a shared Google Sheet.

I: Is previous experience in teaching the course the only guidelines you think of when assigning the teaching load? Or are there other factors to consider?

DC: I also consider the preference of the faculty in terms of the schedule. There are also factors like I have to assign a new faculty to a course where there are other faculty in the team who have already taught the course.

I: When 2 or more sections are opened for a course, do you prefer to have one teacher handle all sections or different faculty? Why is that?

DC: It depends. As I said, if there is a new faculty, then he joins a team of other faculty members who have taught the course before.

I: What’s the most difficult aspect of the process for you?

DC: I would say the most difficult will be adjusting the load after the initial loading.

I: Do you keep a copy of these revisions? May we request a copy of the revisions too?

DC: Yes. I'll send you a copy over email.

I: How often and how many revisions do you usually have to make?

DC: Towards the start and during the start of the new term, revisions are done more often.

I: What are the reasons for a faculty’s leave? When are you usually informed of this?

DC: A faculty can take a service or sabbatical leave depending on the number of years they have already served the university. This can be pre-computed, so I can ask the faculty if he will be availing of the leave. But, there are also other types of leave like study leave, research leave, professional leave, or even personal leave. This is on the option of the faculty, so the faculty should be the one to inform me if he is planning to take the leave at least a month before the start of the following term.

I: What kind of reasons for request of change do you usually entertain? Are there guidelines for these?

DC: I try to accommodate most request, as long as there is no violation to the requirements of the University and no other faculty is disadvantaged due to the request. The formal guidelines are those set by the University, as indicated in the Department Operations Manual. Others are based on my own judgment (on what is right and fair for the majority).

I: What are the university rules that you have to comply?

DC: Rules in faculty loading? Well, there are many. I’ll just give an example. A full-time faculty should have 12 units of load per term. He can be overloaded but only up to at most 16 units per term. However, a faculty who has research load cannot be given overload.

I: Are all of the rules required? On what occasions are they overlooked?

DC: Those that are set by the University are fixed. There may be some exceptions, but these should be justified. For example, a full-time faculty may be assigned less than 12 units of load for a certain term. This is only possible if the faculty agrees (or requests for this), esp. when there are not enough load in the term for all faculty members. The faculty has to agree because he will eventually be “paying back” the underload with an overload (without pay) on another term.

I: There can be different types of load to assign? What’s the difference between a teaching and non-teaching load?

DC: There’s teaching load, research load, or administrative load. I think the names are self-explanatory.

I: What’s an overload? How many times can a faculty be given an overload?

DC: An overload is a load that is more than the 12 units per term that a faculty is expected to serve. A faculty can be overloaded every term.

I: Preferably, how many weeks before the start of the term should the final teaching load be released?

DC: It would be ideal to have it finalized 2 weeks before the start of a term.

I: Dissolving of courses are pretty inevitable right? But can teachers somehow anticipate these? Do they inform you beforehand?

DC: We can predict the number of dissolving courses / sections only during grade consultation day at the earliest. Sometimes dissolving courses is not due to failures incurred by the student, but because some students choose not to enrol in certain courses.

I: Can I also look at a copy of the course offerings?

DC: I'll send it with the sample faculty load.

I: Would you know how I can contact the other department chairs for a short interview as well?

DC: You may reach them through their emails:

george.cua@dlsu.edu.ph

jonathan.gomez@dlsu.edu.ph

I: Thank you very much Ms. Tan for your time. We now have a better understanding of the faculty loading process. But just in case we'll have clarifications, what is your availability next week for a second interview?

DC: Thank you as well. I'm available on Wednesday, from 2pm onward. I wish you good luck in coming up with an appropriate solution for our problem.

**Interview with Faculty**   
[ I ] - Interviewer [F] - Faculty

I: Good Morning! I’m Jake from the College of Computer Studies. I have my teammates here with me as well, James, Hillary and Phoebe. Pleasure to meet you Mr. Santiago! [shakes hands]

F: Pleasure to meet you all. What can I do for you today?

I: We just have a few questions regarding faculty loading that we want to understand more. How much time do you have?

F: I see. I have 1 hour before my next class. Shall we start?

I: Thank you, sir! What courses do you normally teach? How long have you been teaching?

F: I normally teach Software Engineering and Design Pattern courses. I've been teaching for almost 2 years already.

I: When do you usually receive the teaching load? How is this distributed?

F: In the ST department, we are informed of the initial teaching load for the following term during one of the department meetings. But, we (as faculty) are expected to just view the shared google sheet constantly to check if there are updates.

I: How do you keep track of the revisions?

F: I don’t keep track of the revisions. Personally, I just check a few days before the start of the new term because I know that there are still most likely changes due to the effects of the previous term, that is due to failures.

I: Do you request for change of load? How do you do that?

F: Upon being informed of the initial load, I sometimes ask if I can be given another subject to teach or a different schedule than what is initially assigned. I do this either by talking to the vice chair or chair personally or just via email. I understand though that not all requests can be granted.

I: Can you please describe what’s your ideal teaching load? Why is this considered ideal?

F: If I have research load together with teaching load, ideally I will only be assigned to teach on the MW or on the TH (not everyday) so I can focus on the research on the other days. However, if I have all teaching load, the ideal will be only 1 preparation (i.e., 4 sections of the same subject) and the time will not be too early and will have no break in between the classes, so that I can prepare (including checking papers and other tasks) either before or after my classes, so that I don’t lose my focus and my momentum will not be disrupted..

I: For a new course that needs to be taught, how much lead time would you like to have for preparation?

F: At least a term.

I: Do you have any preferences in schedule or even courses?

F: Yes

I: Have you experienced a teaching overload? How was it? Does it affect your teaching?

F: Yes. It is very tiring, especially if I have successive terms with overload. In teaching, there is not much effect, but I have difficulty in terms of managing the workload. Because there are deadlines that I need to meet, like returning papers of exercises and exams. So because of the overload, sometimes I get delayed or some of my other tasks gets left behind.

I: Have you experienced having a teaching load with say, research or admin load? How does it affect your teaching?

F: Yes. Actually, when I had teaching load with research load, it seems that I am more focused in the tasks related to teaching. But, maybe my research load got a little left behind because the deadline is not as urgent as those for my classes. hahaha...

I: Have you experienced having your load changed on the first week of the term? What was it like?

F: I have. It is really confusing. Sometimes, I feel that some of my effort preparing for a course was for nothing, because in the end I was given a different subject. There’s nothing I can do except adjust because it is nobody’s fault anyway.

I: I understand that feeling sir. I didn't know such problems existed among faculty members as well.

Anyway, thank you for this opportunity sir. In case we'll have clarifications, what is your availability next week for a second interview?

F: My pleasure. You can schedule another one on Thursday. I'm free around 4pm.