

Faculty Workload Flexibility and Modified Work Assignments

Effective deployment of the talents and expertise of faculty at the University of Mississippi is critical to the University's success, and every faculty member plays a role in our continuous pursuit of excellence. Different departments and colleges/schools may have different research/scholarship, teaching, and service responsibilities and workload requirements. Each department is responsible for determining how to evaluate Faculty Excellence and workload.

Department chairs have authority to determine a faculty member's specific assignments and workload expectations, including teaching responsibilities. The University of Mississippi allows department chairs to have flexibility in assigning workloads and allowing faculty to use their talents differently to contribute to the productivity of the department and to achieve the mission of the academic unit. The department chair is responsible for distributing workload equitably over time.

Flexibility and modified work assignments are necessary to meet the wide range of activities that are integral to the departmental mission and address the particular areas of interest/expertise of faculty members. In addition, demands on the department as a whole and on individual faculty can fluctuate on a semester-by-semester or year-to-year basis. Therefore, faculty workload assignments should be evaluated regularly so that institutional needs (e.g., securing program accreditation or implementing curricular changes), department needs and funding, and individual faculty performance may be considered. Flexibility options include, but are not limited to, increasing or decreasing course load, shifting teaching load, team teaching, and half-semester scheduling. Modified work assignments may include, but are not limited to, teaching a different course, developing new materials for a new course, writing a research proposal, performing research or creative works, teaching online, developing a new course, writing a book, graduate student mentoring, leadership responsibilities, service obligations, and other duties as assigned.

Faculty members facing special personal circumstances (e.g., birth/adoption of a child, personal or family health situation) may request flexibility or modified work assignments with the understanding that requests must be balanced against the needs of the academic unit. The request for flexibility/modified work assignments is in addition to the leave policies and FMLA policies which are already available to qualifying faculty. When faculty members are facing special personal circumstances, the department chair may request support from the Dean and Provost's Office to assist in accommodating the faculty member's need for flexibility or modified work assignment for a given semester.