

Development of a Faculty Work Load System: A Case Study in a Public University

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ABSTRACT

In a Thai public university, a faculty member has multiple duties besides teaching and researching, such as administrative work, and assisting the committee members in many faculty projects. The workload for a faculty member varies depends on the university policy, the faculty policy and the department policy. The target at the university policy being the research and teaching, a faculty member must concentrate on these tasks. However, the administrative work cannot be avoided and the workload depends on the number of people in the department. Each university has different ways to divide the workload. In the author's university, the information on the work done on each type of job is split. Thus, in this paper, the author describes the case on gathering the workload information and proposes to integrate the information which helps organize the workload for the whole department effectively. The author presents the developed information system which divides the overall workload based on existing information and views the workload for each faculty member, and department. They also discuss the integration issues to existing Management Information Systems in the university.

Keywords: Faculty Work Load, Information System, Public University, University Workload, Workload System

INTRODUCTION

In Thailand, public universities and private universities have different ways to assign the work of a faculty member and evaluate the performance of a faculty member. Private universities are just like private companies. Each faculty gets either a short-term contract or long-term contract. Their performance gets evaluated and the salaries get increased proportionally. Unlike public universities which are government organizations, the most faculty members are government officers. Their per-

formance evaluation is less important since it has very small effect on the salary increment. The salary increment for government officers depend mainly on the whole yearly government budget and the seniority of the officer ranks. Thus, the government officer faculty may not pay attention to the performance towards the organization. To motivate them, outsource income is assigned as top-up on the salary. Thus, some internal regulation on workload characterization needs to be developed for assigning such a bonus.

The faculty members in Thailand are focused on the teaching job. However, there are various types of the universities based on

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Thailand Ministry of Education. Some institution is only focused on the graduate level. Most of these are in the urban area. They have a number of high-quality students. Thus, the research can be focused intensively. Some institution is a teaching type of institutions where many thousands of students exist. Most of these are in suburb areas. Then the faculty member cannot do research much. Among the two kinds, like our university, we have both undergraduate level and graduate level and we are in the middle tier university where most of students are not of high quality. The institution needs to focus on both research and teaching since the university ranking is dependent on both sides. Then the faculty member needs to do both research and teaching.

For small to medium size universities (5,000-6,000 students), such as the university in the rural area, the teaching staff is sometimes inadequate (<http://www.mua.go.th>). Also, there are limited budgets to hire the administrative persons. Lecturers, then, need to do administrative works besides teaching. The administrative works are more for the case of a small faculty where the number of administrative persons is very few. The faculty members have to teach 4-5 courses per semester plus administrative works. Then, researching time becomes less though it is also important. To clearly identifying the workload unit for teaching and research, the faculty member needs to write the summary report. Such the documents may be subjective unless the clear regulation on the working unit for each type of job is provided.

Purpose

In order to help identify workload of a faculty member clearly, precisely, and conveniently, an information system is needed. However, in the university, certain information systems exist. Some of them are paper-based and some are computer-based. Information about the workload is scattered around them. To save the cost of development and make use of existing systems, the integration approach may be good.

In this work, we intend to describe a case study on adopting the faculty workload system in a medium-sized public university in Thailand. We do not particularly develop a new workload formula since we need to base on our traditional one. However, we develop an extension system to the system to aid the workload calculation to our department to be more realistic. We develop the information system and propose to integrate it to existing MIS in the university.

By integrating such a system to the university, our implementation presents the following advantages:

1. The mistake in calculation will be reduced.
2. The manual data by the faculty member is reduced and the workload computation is more realistic.
3. The summary reports are useful in many aspects: for auditing the quality assurance, for the department head to inspect the past performance of each member in details, for the faculty dean to do the personnel planning, research performance planning etc.

Our workload system is customized to our university policy and regulations to compute the workload. Necessary documents are stored as they are supplementary evidences to the workload reports. The system must be integrated to existing environments for the correct data references. We then discuss the challenges in the integration to other existing and upcoming MIS.

Literature Review

Workload systems for faculty are important to every university. Several issues are discussed about the workload (Lloyd, 1994), (<http://www.calstatela.edu/academic/aa/semester/docs/FacultyWorkLoadissues.pdf>). Many universities all over the world propose the policy and some have their own systems including (Utah Valley University, 2009) (<http://is.asu.edu/workload/index2.html>), <http://academicsenate.mich.edu/Policy/FacultyWorkLoadSystem>.

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