



UNIVERSITY OF OREGON
College of Arts and Sciences

April 8, 2015

To: College of Arts and Sciences Faculty
From: W. Andrew Marcus, Interim Tykeson Dean
Re: **NTTF workload policies**

Late last term, the associate deans and I met with many of you in your departments to discuss changes we have made to NTTF workload policies. I want to acknowledge the deep frustration this process caused in many parts of the College. We have learned a lot from you in our visits. In addition, we have met repeatedly with United Academics President Michael Dreiling and Executive Director David Cecil to find common ground about how to conduct the process in a more inclusive fashion and how to address key issues of concern regarding NTTF. All of the conversations have been collegial and most helpful. We are hopeful that some of the resulting changes will help alleviate some NTTF-related concerns and improve the future process for developing TTF professional responsibility documents. A subsequent memo will outline procedures for incorporating changes resulting from these conversations.

The remainder of this memorandum is intended to further explain the rationale for changes that were made and to identify areas where, after many conversations, we have altered our conclusions.

Below are the principles we followed in editing documents provided by departments, followed by changes we will make in response to comments from departmental faculty and United Academics.

- 1) CAS must be able to offer its existing curriculum without adding more faculty.

Changes: No changes have been made, but we did have conversations with the small number of departments that had proposed to reduce teaching loads or mandate reductions in class size relative to past practice. We explained that we were unable to accept these proposals because they would have required us to add faculty to meet existing curricular and enrollment needs.

- 2) Standard full-time course loads should be comparable across similar CAS units. But within this framework, discretionary course releases can be used to recognize local variations and current practices and to accommodate individual faculty members who have heavy teaching and service responsibilities.

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Changes: **To strengthen this principle, we will ask departments to establish guidelines for heads in granting discretionary course releases.**

In our original templates, we had already authorized a one-course reduction at the discretion of the department head, and additional course releases with the dean's approval. This provision was intended to promote local flexibility and recognize local variation, but many faculty members expressed a preference that course releases at the department level be decided according to documented criteria. Developing local guidelines on what types of circumstances merit course release will make the process more equitable and transparent. CAS will soon initiate an expedited process to involve faculty in producing these guidelines and documenting them appropriately. We view this as an issue to be decided locally depending on the unit's instructional needs.

- 3) Current NTTF should not be asked to teach more courses for the same compensation.

Changes: **While CAS will not be changing its overall policy regarding course loads in this context, we will commit to working on a case-by-case basis to hold individuals harmless.** Specifically, we will ensure that any current NTTF affected by an increase in the standard course load through the development of this policy will not be asked to teach more courses for the same compensation, or be compensated less for teaching the same number of courses. We are working closely with department heads, Academic Affairs, and United Academics leadership on specific cases.

- 4) Adjunct NTTF are employed primarily to teach courses while career NTTF should have available a 10% FTE allocation to engage in service, job-related scholarship, and professional development at their own discretion.

Changes: **To address concerns that faculty raised, the standard full-time course load for adjuncts will now be equal to that for career NTTF in the same department.** Our original templates had made one course equal 10% FTE for both career and adjunct NTTF. We reserved one course equivalent for career NTTF to engage in discretionary service, scholarship, and professional development (thus, a nine-course load for 1.0 FTE). Such an approach implied, however, that full-time adjuncts should teach 10 courses when our intent had in fact been to employ them at 90% FTE to do the same work, at the same compensation, as in the past. We heard from many individuals regarding unanticipated problems created by not employing adjuncts at 100% FTE. To avoid these problems, we will amend adjunct NTTF policies so that they, too, reserve 10% FTE for discretionary service, scholarship, and professional development.

Furthermore, we wish to clarify that Visiting Professorships, as a special form of adjunct position typically used to replace tenure-track faculty on leave, may entail significant research and/or service responsibilities as a substantial portion of FTE.

- 5) Job descriptions for major administrative service (e.g. undergraduate advisor or curriculum coordinator), including any associated course releases and/or stipends, should be removed from the main body of the professional responsibilities document but still made publicly available to faculty.

Changes: No further changes are needed, but we wish to underscore that these job descriptions, which faculty had carefully crafted to address local curricular needs, will most certainly be preserved. We had moved job descriptions for major administrative service to an addendum to enable departments to make changes at their discretion without seeking the Provost's approval, which the CBA requires if the main body of the professional responsibilities document is altered. CAS did not change the job descriptions themselves, which incorporate a great deal of nuance that by no means should be discarded; rather, we requested that they be formulated and updated, as needed, outside the formal CBA-mandated process. Some faculty have expressed concern that this creates a risk that job descriptions will be changed without due consultation. However, we believe that, through their shared governance structures, departments now have robust processes in place—processes that include participation by NTTF—to ensure this does not happen.

- 6) Opportunities for NTTF to teach and serve outside their home departments (e.g. in interdisciplinary or enrichment programs) should be preserved.

Changes: No changes were needed. The language included in all policies already allows NTTF to take advantage of these opportunities. In addition, maintaining a standard course load across similar departments allows faculty members to teach in other academic programs without necessitating formal adjustments to FTE, which are difficult to administer and budget for.

Let me close by reiterating our appreciation for the hard work and commitment that went into drafting these policies. This has been an arduous process for all concerned. While we were unable to accept all of the proposals departments submitted, many of the changes we have made in response to our conversations with you preserve local departmental flexibility rather than impose a CAS standard for all units. Despite the sometimes difficult conversations we have had, I believe we have made progress that will serve us in good stead as we turn, next, to TTF professional responsibilities policies. We look forward to resuming our conversations with you in that spirit.