

## Guidelines for Planning Course Offerings and Assigning Teaching Duties Spring 2009

The diversity of CLAS makes it impossible to lay out a single set of inflexible rules for planning courses and assigning teaching duties. Therefore, rather than laying out strict rules, this document clarifies the principles that should guide the process, and some suggestions on the process itself.

### CHAIR RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Development of a comprehensive course plan. Chairs are responsible for assembling a course offering plan driven primarily by curriculum and student demand, but they can and should rely on the Dean's office for help in linking departmental offerings to College goals, in assessing the appropriate size for different classes, and for clarifying expectations of instructors.
2. Implementation of the overall plan, including how best to staff the needed course offerings. One important consideration in staffing these courses is the need for students to have as much interaction with tenured and tenure-track faculty as possible at all levels of the curriculum. Faculty preferences may determine who teaches which of the needed courses, but should not determine which courses are needed or when those courses are offered.
3. Use of all the available class periods and class days in order to provide students a range of scheduling options.
4. Continuation of the practice of offering interdisciplinary and cross-listed courses. We do not want concerns over who gets credit for SCH production to interfere with courses that are good for our students and faculty.
5. Monitoring of departmental SCH production. Broadly speaking, our resource limitations necessitate that we use our teaching resources as fully as possible. In a very limited number of instances there may be good reasons to reduce the number of SCH's, and Chairs should discuss any proposed reductions in advance with the Dean's office so that overall College offerings can remain consistent.

### COURSE EXPECTATIONS:

1. There should be a relationship between the size of the course and the expectations for how much feedback students will get on their work, including papers, problem sets, projects, exams, etc. In either stand-alone courses with 35 or fewer students, or large lecture courses with discussion sections with 25 or fewer students led by TA's, the assumption is that there will be multiple graded assignments throughout the semester and that feedback will be significant. This is one of the main justifications for classes of this size. In larger stand-alone classes, it is reasonable to expect that the overall grading/feedback load will not grow proportionately, and that each student might therefore receive less feedback. Courses with small enrollments should be taught only when there are overriding curricular reasons for

doing so. Simply meeting an arbitrary minimum does not mean we're using our resources wisely. When there is uncertainty about what is appropriate, this is a good time to consult with the Dean's office.

#### RESOURCE ALLOCATION PARAMETERS:

1. In evaluating whether departments need additional faculty lines, aggregate SCH production or average SCH per faculty member are NOT compelling data, because they tell us little about whether all courses are well enrolled. Having a small number of gigantic courses and several others that are under-enrolled does not necessarily demonstrate wise use of resources.
2. It is important that classes taught by tenured/tenure track faculty not have low enrollments. Tenured/tenure track faculty teaching habitually under-enrolled courses may be viewed as evidence that the department has more tenured/tenure-track faculty than it needs.
3. When instructors of any type are teaching small numbers of students without providing substantial feedback on written work, it will generally be seen as a sign that instructional resources are underutilized.
4. We will look to see whether, over time, resources are being put into "bottleneck" courses in order to ease students' progress toward graduation.
5. Expectations for how many courses a tenured/tenure track faculty member will teach each year vary by discipline. Two classes per semester is the baseline. In the sciences, extensive daily supervision of graduate students results in lower classroom teaching expectations. For genuine teacher-scholars, who exhibit strong productivity in both their research activity and their teaching, these norms should guide assignments. There are several circumstances in which assignments might reasonably deviate from these norms.
  - a. Some appointments, such as Eminent Scholar positions, are recognized in writing as research intensive appointments, and carry lower expectations of teaching.
  - b. In some cases, a reduction in teaching expectations may be appropriate due to extraordinary research activity or to service activity. Such exceptions should not be made without prior approval of the Dean's office.
  - c. In some cases, tenured faculty might wish to make more of their contribution through teaching, and less through research. Such individuals can be assigned up to six courses per year, with their teaching taking a correspondingly larger role in merit salary evaluations.
  - d. In cases where faculty are not sustaining the research activity expected of tenured faculty at UF, chairs may assign them up to six courses per year, with their teaching taking a correspondingly larger role in merit salary evaluations.