

Distance Education Teacher Load

(Based on an earlier Teacher Load recommendation approved by DE Committee and presented to the Academic Senate in April 2008. The Senate decided at that time to defer a vote and send the recommendation on to the Faculty Association. The recommendation regarding Teacher Load was forwarded to the Faculty Association with no response throughout 2008 and 2009.)

Rationale

As an essential part of our commitment to distance education student success Pasadena City College must provide quality online teaching and learning environments that maintain the highest standards and best practices. Assuring quality instruction translates into online student success by relying on the instructor's complex tasks of maintaining pedagogical, social, managerial, and technical roles (Berge, 1995) coupled with instructor-student regular effective contact (Title 5, section 55204).

The 2009 Sloan National Commission on Online Learning reports that, "nearly 64 percent of faculty said it takes *somewhat more* or *a lot more effort to teach* online compared to a face-to-face course." Higher education administrators believe that it takes more faculty time and effort to teach an online course (p. 6).

In relation to distance education courses and teacher load, the AAUP in their 2000 interpretive comments revision of the Statement on Faculty Workload, states:

No examination of teaching loads today would be complete without consideration of how distance education has affected the work of faculty members who engage in it. Since faculty members have primary responsibility for instruction, the curricular changes needed to implement new technologies...require substantial faculty participation... Consideration should also be given to the matter of increases in contact hours in the real or asynchronous time required to achieve interactive learning and student accessibility (AAUP, Policy Documents and Reports, Committee on Teaching, Research and Publication, Statement on Faculty Workload with Interpretive Comments, p. 195).

The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges' *Technology in Education: A Summary of Practical Policy and Workload Language*, states that distance education courses with effective instructor-student contact require more faculty time than corresponding lecture courses. There is "growing evidence that faculty spend more time than in a traditional course when they interact via email or the web." (2000, p.26) Cavanaugh's 2005 *Teaching Online – A Time Comparison* analysis compares time spent teaching online courses and why distance education courses require more time than face-to-face courses:

- a) Online time on task is tied directly to the course quality, and
- b) Time demands for even small online courses exceed those for in-class courses.

Lawrence Tomei's 2004 *The Impact of Online Teaching on Faculty Load* supports the ASCCC 2000 statement. Tomei's research found in light of the additional time and workload issues involved with a distance education course, "online teaching demanded a minimum of 20 percent more time than traditional [face-to-face] instruction, most of which was spent presenting instructional content." (p. 7)

Workload is further discussed in the 2002 *Technology in Education* article, wherein the Academic Senate references Tyner's *Guidelines for Negotiating Distance Education Issues*. According to those guidelines – "A faculty member teaching a distance education course for the first time requires substantial time and effort to learn new technologies and/or develop or adapt new materials." (Cited in Academic Senate for California Community Colleges)

WASC red flag: If faculty are teaching a full-time teaching load while simultaneously "engaging in distance education course development and delivery," this situation is considered a warning sign that the institution is not building the appropriate systems to sustain a growing distance education initiative." (U.S. Department of Education Office of Postsecondary Education, p. 226).

As cited a number of times previously in making other DE recommendations, the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges recommends that workload issues, such as teacher load, in relation to distance education classes, be treated differently from face-to-face classes *only* "if there is good *educational justification*" (Walton, James-Hanz, p. 20). Clearly a recommendation on appropriate teacher load is fundamental in providing high quality instruction that maintains the highest standards and best practices in the online teaching and learning environment.

The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges discussion of workload issues further states, "Just as class size has a significant effect on the quality and success of the mandated effective instructor-student contact, so can the teaching load of the faculty member.... In addition, reduced on-campus availability of faculty who teach distance education sections impacts their ability to participate in traditional collegial meetings and set the decision-making climate of their institution." Two of the most important questions about distance education workload issues to be considered according the ASCCC are, "Is the maximum semester load different for faculty teaching distance education sections and regular classroom sections?" and, "Are instructors required to teach a certain portion of their load on campus?" (Walton, James-Hanz, p. 20). These questions may ultimately need to be resolved through collective bargaining, but the DE Committee must make a recommendation.

The current PCC contract language regarding face-to-face teacher load contract delineates load for both full-time, adjunct instructors, and credit and non-credit courses. Therefore, faculty teaching load for PCC distance education courses must be added to contract language.

See: *Memorandum of Understanding Between Pasadena City College CCA/CTA and Pasadena Area Community College District Concerning Teaching Load* (PCC Faculty Association Website, 2003)

(PCC Contract Agreement July 1, 2007 – June 30, 2008, Article 5, Working Conditions, 5.2.1) <http://www.pasadena.edu/hr/CTAfinal08.pdf>

5.2 TEACHING FACULTY - CREDIT COURSES

5.2.1 The assignment of a full-time, classroom instructor of credit classes shall be one hundred seventy-six (176) days per fiscal year (eleven [11]-month employees add twenty-two [22] days), thirty four (34) hours per week consisting of a combination of in-class teaching and preparation for teaching; five and one half (5.5) hours of additional time for student conferences; and five and one half (5.5) hours for professional growth and development, College governance and other professional responsibilities. The first duty day shall be the first day of classes. First-year contract (probationary) and temporary faculty shall have two (2) additional days of assignment for orientation.

5.2.3 Unless excepted by this Agreement, the classroom assignment for a full-time instructor of credit classes shall be a minimum of thirty four (30) lecture equivalent hours (l.e.h.) per year. An "l.e.h." is based on one lecture hour per week for a full semester (18 weeks).

5.2.3.1 Unless excepted by this Agreement, each hour designated in the College Bulletin as lecture shall be given credit as (1) l.e.h.

5.2.3.2 Unless excepted by this Agreement, each hour designated in the College Bulletin as laboratory shall be given credit as (0.75) l.e.h.

5.2.3.3 Each hour designated in the College Bulletin as laboratory in a Physical Education Activity course shall be given credit as (0.7143) l.e.h.

5.2.3.4 Each hour designated as field practice shall be given (0.200) l.e.h.

5.2.4 New employees will be placed no higher than the 14th step on the salary schedule. Contract faculty (credit and non-credit), effective July 1, 2003, shall be eligible to teach all four sessions (fall, winter, spring, summer).

5.4 ADJUNCT FACULTY – CREDIT COURSES

5.4.1 Adjunct faculty should be paid comparable to contract faculty for the same responsibilities. Achieving the goal of comparable pay for comparable work means that the District has reached parity.

5.4.2 Comparable work for contract and adjunct faculty is defined as classroom teaching, class preparation and grading, and advising students.

5.4.3 A contract faculty weekly teaching load is defined as 17 hours of classroom teaching.

5.5 TEACHING FACULTY - NONCREDIT CLASSES

5.5.1 The full-time noncredit load shall be one hundred seventy-six (176) days per fiscal year, (eleven [11]-month employees add twenty-two [22] days), forty (40) hours per week consisting of twenty-five (25) teaching hours; twelve (12) preparation hours; and three (3) hours for conference and/or governance. First-year contract (probationary) and temporary faculty shall have two (2) additional days of assignment for orientation.

5.5.2 A minimum of thirty (30) hours of the weekly assignment shall be scheduled. This requirement shall include travel time between two sites when teaching assignments for a given day are on more than one campus.

5.5.3 Those affected employees on less than 100% contract assignment shall serve the pro rata hours to those in sections 5.5.1 and 5.5.2.

5.5.4 New employees will be placed no higher than the seventh (7th) step on the salary schedule.

Distance Education Committee Teacher Load Recommendation:

The Distance Education Committee recommends that consideration must be given to the increased workload of facilitating fully online courses.

Recommended guidelines:

1. The portion of an individual instructor's load delivered online should not exceed 2/3 (two-thirds) of the instructor's full-time contract load.

EXCEPTION: An exception to the above guideline (1.) will be allowed for faculty members who teach in a Division or Program where the curricular needs of the students, the availability of classroom resources, the structure of existing and new programs within the Division or Program, or fluctuations in student demand among semesters would support an increased percentage of online teaching load in some semesters. This determination shall be made by the Division Dean in consultation with the faculty in the discipline, Program or Division.

2. Instructors who have not previously taught online may teach no more than two online course sections in their first semester of teaching online.
3. A new PCC instructor who has taught a comparable online course at another accredited institution of higher learning may teach no more than two online course sections as part of their load in their first semester of teaching.
4. Participation by faculty in distance education at Pasadena City College is voluntary. The decision by a faculty member not to be involved with distance education will not be negatively evaluated.

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