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Teaching Load Reduction - Definitions and Guidelines

The PSUAD is seeking for the best teaching experience for students as well as for Faculty. In the daily work of Faculty, administrative tasks and either research or academic commitments are part of the excellence in teaching as they help develop the University as a whole. This “excellence in teaching” component is a core value and a strategic goal of the PSUAD. In order to undertake and complete administrative tasks related to PSUAD’s academic offerings and research and/or academic projects, Faculty may benefit from a Teaching Load Reduction. In this regard, the PSUAD will, with certain caveats, allow Faculty to increase research, community service and/or administrative activities through a reduction in teaching load. (HR Manual, 5.2.1.1).

In general, research and community service activity will be higher during the summer and other non-teaching periods as outlined in the academic calendar. During the teaching periods, teaching load may vary between semesters but on-average will reflect 6 contact hours per week for Heads of Academic Departments, 9 hours per week for regular professorial Employees and 18 contact hours for regular Lecturers (156, 234 and 468 annual contact hours respectively, HR Manual, 5.2.1.2).

The following guidelines have been prepared to more fully clarify under what circumstances Teaching Load Reductions may be requested, and to assist Faculty in how to apply for such reductions. In no case are the guidelines intended to replace the language in the policy manual relating to Teaching Load Reductions. If an employee has a question or comment they may contact their Head of Department or the HR Department.

1) Administrative / Community services / Program Development:

- a) Reduction for such activities may be requested on a semester basis (HR Manual, 5.2.4.3) and has to be re-evaluated accordingly.
- b) Any regular Faculty performing a specific administrative / community service / program development task in order to support the academic growth of the PSUAD is entitled to ask for a load reduction.
- c) In approving requests for teaching load reductions, the University will consider; potential impact on students, the operational needs of the unit (including budgetary considerations), the academic/community merit of the activity to be undertaken during the period of reduction and its alignment with the mission and vision of the PSUAD (HR Manual, 5.2.1.3).
- d) The maximum teaching load reduction is normally set to 3 contact hours (HR Manual 5.2.4.4), but any amount below that limit could be granted as well, depending on the nature and intensity of the administrative duty that grounds the request.

- e) A reduced teaching load may not be granted for assignments or tasks for which Faculty receive financial compensation. However, to address budget considerations, Faculty members may be entitled to buy-out their teaching with income derived from external research grants or consultancy (HR Manual 5.2.4.5).
- f) To initiate a request, the Faculty member hands over to the Head of Department (HR Manual 5.2.4.1) a written request, including all supporting documents necessary to support the claim.
- g) The Head of Department reviews the request, adds his/her comments/observations and decides to escalate, or not, the request further to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs ('DVC Academics', HR Manual 5.2.4.1). This operation should be performed in a timely manner, with a normal response time of one week, and the HOD should include a clear set of recommendations.
- h) If the request is brought up to the DVC Academics, it is his/her responsibility to present it, in a timely manner, with his/her own recommendations and comments, to the Academic Council (HR Manual, 5.2.4.2), for final endorsement and recommendation. The DVC Academics checks on the grounds of the request, on the impact on the academic schedule and course delivery, as well as on the financial feasibility.
- i) The recommendation of the Academic Council is issued to the Vice Chancellor after a formal vote by the Council members gathered in a closed session. All discussions and comments expressed within this Committee related to individual cases are confidential. The recommendation shall be presented in writing with a clear statement being "for" or "against" the request and outlining the rationale for the recommendation.
- j) The Academic Council hands over to the Vice Chancellor ('VC') its recommendation, positive or negative, in a timely manner and the final decision is made by the VC. The outcome of his/her decision is then communicated in writing by the VC to the Faculty member and HOD.
- k) For operational reasons, the implementation of an approved decision is normally effective from the next academic semester and mid-semester requests will not normally be entertained (HR Manual 5.2.4.3). If, however, the budget is available, the VC may, in some individual cases, decide on an immediate implementation.

2) Research:

- a) Reduction for such activities may be requested on a semester basis (HR Manual, 5.2.4.3) and has to be re-evaluated accordingly.
- b) Any regular Faculty wishing to undertake a specific research project in order to support knowledge growth and transfer within the PSUAD is entitled to ask for a teaching load reduction.
- c) In approving requests for teaching load reductions, the University will consider; potential impact on students, the operational needs of the unit (including budgetary considerations), the academic/research merit of the activity to be undertaken during the period of reduction and its alignment with the mission and vision of the PSUAD (HR Manual, 5.2.1.3).

- d) The maximum load reduction is normally set to 3 contact hours (HR Manual 5.2.4.4), but any amount below that limit could be granted as well, depending on the nature and intensity of the project that grounds the request.
- e) A reduced teaching load may not be granted for assignments or tasks for which Faculty receive financial compensation. However, to address budget considerations, Faculty members may be entitled to buy-out their teaching with income derived from external research grants or consultancy (HR Manual 5.2.4.5).
- f) To initiate a request, the Faculty member hands over to the Head of Department (HR Manual 5.2.4.1) a written request, including all supporting documents necessary to support the claim.
- g) The Head of Department reviews the request, adds his/her comments/observations and decides to escalate, or not, the request further to the Research Committee (HR Manual 5.2.4.1). This operation should be performed in a timely manner, with a normal time response of one week.
- h) If the request is brought up to the Research Committee, it is the Committee's responsibility to present, in a timely manner, its own written recommendations and comments to the Academic Council for final endorsement and recommendation to the Vice Chancellor. The Research Committee checks on the scientific level of the request and evaluates its alignment with PSUAD's strategic orientation
- i) In addition to reviewing recommendations received, the Academic Council will be responsible for assessing the feasibility and financial sustainability of the request.
- j) The recommendation of the Academic Council is issued to the Vice Chancellor after a formal vote by the Council members gathered in a closed session. All discussions and comments expressed within this Committee related to individual cases are confidential. The recommendation shall be presented in writing with a clear statement being "for" or "against" the request and outlining the rationale for the recommendation.
- k) The Academic Council hands over to the Vice Chancellor ('VC') its recommendation, positive or negative, in a timely manner and the final decision is made by the VC. The outcome of his/her decision is then communicated in writing by the VC to the Faculty member and HOD.
- l) For operational reasons, the implementation of an approved decision is normally effective from the next academic semester and mid-semester requests will not normally be entertained (HR Manual 5.2.4.3). If, however, the budget is available, the VC may, in some individual cases, decide on an immediate implementation

3) General notes:

- a) In all cases where a teaching load reduction is granted, the Faculty member cannot in turn make any claim for extra teaching hours payment, as the load reduction is intended to grant time in order to perform a specific task or project. This incompatibility stands on a semester basis and applies accordingly.
- b) Review council/committee members from the same department as the faculty making the request must excuse themselves from the review process so as to avoid any potential conflict of interest.