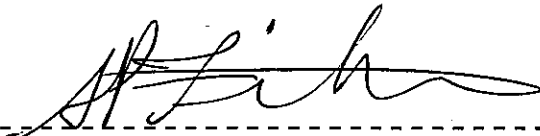


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Academic Staff Workload Policy

Sponsor division	Academic Affairs and Research
Responsible Department	BIRP
Related WSU policies	
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Academic Staff Workload Policy	
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WSU: Academic Staff Workload Policy



WALTER SISULU UNIVERSITY

ACADEMIC STAFF WOPRKLOAD POLICY



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TITLE:	ACADEMIC STAFF WORKLOAD POLICY		
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1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for distributing workload among academic staff. It is general practice at institutions of higher learning to afford all academic staff, in addition to their teaching time, specific time allocation for research activities. This is done in the interest of increasing research outputs, and making academics accountable for time allocations. The policy also defines the proportion of teaching time in relation to time for research, community engagement, and administrative work. The policy will thus detail the parameters used in determining academic staff workloads

2. SCOPE

The policy will apply to all academic staff, both part-time and full time, at Walter Sisulu University.

3. DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS

3.1 Workload: "the full spectrum of work commitments of an academic staff in an academic unit of a higher education institution. This comprises work that contributes to the academic enterprise as agreed upon between the academic staff member and his/her supervisor and/or institution." (Bitzer, 2007). It is a mix of the three basic areas of academic activity, namely, teaching, research and community engagement. Workload is thus more than teaching load.



4. DIVISION OF ACADEMIC WORK

Academic work is divisible into the following four areas:

- Teaching and development of learning material;
- Research and scholarship;
- Community engagement; and
- Administrative work

5. PRINCIPLES

It is recommended that the work load distribution system or model be guided by the following principles:

- Academic workloads will take into account all components of academic work, that is, teaching research and community engagement.
- The allocation of workload for academic staff will be reasonable, fair and equitable
- The process of allocation of workload will be transparent and should recognise the academic staff member's core areas of academic work.
- There will be an opportunity for staff members to be consulted about the workload allocation
- Academic staff workloads will support the strategic direction of the institution
- The key activities of academic work, namely, teaching, research, community engagement and administration will differ between one individual workload and another across the University.
- The four key activities, *teaching, research, community engagement and administration*, are all valued as contributions to the University's academic life
- Teaching should be undertaken by all academic staff, with the sole exception of research-only appointments
- Class contact hours will be allocated in a systematic, equitable and open manner, within clearly understood annual limits to total hours



- Beginning academic staff will have a lower teaching load than established academics, and will receive appropriate support and guidance from their senior colleagues.

6. WORKLOAD DETERMINATION

The following factors should be considered when determining academic workloads:

- Class size and marking load;
- Postgraduate supervision;
- Course and subject development;
- On-line teaching;
- Research and consultancies;
- Publications;
- Higher degree studies;
- Publicity and promotion activities;
- Community and professional service;
- Academic administration;
- Service on school, faculty and university committees; and
- Other factors that the university considers contribute to its mission and objectives.

7. CONTACT HOURS

Scheduled class contact hours should include:

- Lectures;
- Formally timetabled tutorial classes;
- Seminars;
- Workshops and practical classes;
- Supervision of field-work and professional placement;
- Professional assessment.

Contact hours weighting for teaching through flexible delivery, block mode or professional programs taught outside the standard semesters will be the same as for an equivalent subject taught through face-to-face methods unless



schools have negotiated with employees appropriate contact hour weighting based on their experience.

8. APPROPRIATENESS OF DUTIES

The duties of members of academic employees are to be appropriate to their stage of development as members of the academic community. In particular, it is inappropriate for employees to act as the sole or chief supervisor of a research degree which they do not themselves possess. **A junior member of staff** should not normally have sole responsibility for the design and delivery of whole subjects

9. UNDERGRADUATE TEACHING

With the exception of research-specific appointments, all academic employees will be expected to take part in undergraduate teaching

10. WORKLOAD ALLOCATION GUIDELINES

The common practice for institutions is to have the allocation formula or percentages guided by the mission of the institution.

The basic norm that should be used to serve as the starting point is the number of hours an academic should work per year. From that norm, one should work out the hours that an academic is expected to work per week. The South African employment legislation sets the working hours at 1950 per year (HEMIS: 2004), which works out to about 40.6 hours per week in an institution whose academic year comprises 48 weeks. The number of weeks set in WSU's academic calendar is 42 weeks. This gives a maximum of 46.4 hours per week. As indicated in 4 above, workload is not measured solely by the time spent by staff in the classroom. It is also measured in terms of time spent in scholarly research, community engagement, and administrative work.

One can work out workload over a week or a year. For instance, using the standard norm of a 40 hour working week, a lecturer would be expected to divide a working week as follows:-



Table 1: Workload per Week

ACTIVITY	HOURS PER WEEK	SPECIFICATION
Teaching	20	Contact time with students; preparation for class; & marking.
Research	12	Research activity towards a higher qualification; knowledge generation and distribution, supervision of student' research projects.
Community Engagement	4	Use of academic expertise in meeting the needs of the community; provision of a particular service to the community.
Administration	4	Committee meetings; mark schedules; & other academic related management tasks prescribed by departments.
Total	40	

The figures in the above table serve only as examples.

A table of academic workload per year can be worked out as follows:

Table 2: Workload per Year

CATEGORY	HOURS PER YEAR	SPECIFICATION
Teaching	750	Contact time with students; preparation for class; & marking.
Research	500	Research activity towards a higher qualification; knowledge generation and distribution, supervision of student' research projects.
Community Engagement	450	Use of academic expertise in meeting the needs of the community; provision of a particular service to the community
Management/ Administration	250	Committee meetings; mark schedules; & other academic related management tasks prescribed by departments.
Total	1950	



It is envisaged that time allocated for teaching, research, community engagement and administration will vary according to the different levels or grades of academic staff members, however, the following guidelines are proposed

Table 3: Percentage of time Allotted According to Grades and Levels of Academic Staff

Academic Level	Teaching	Research	Administration	Community Service
Professor	35%	35%	18%	12%
Associate Professor	36%	35%	17%	12%
S. Lecturer	40%	35%	15%	10%
Lecturer	50%	32%	10%	8%
J. Lecturer	46%	40%	7%	7%

The above tables, Table 1 and 2, work on the maximum times set, the 1950 hours per year and 40.6 hours per week in a academic year of 48 weeks. An academic staff member may be allocated 20 teaching hours per week 12 for research, 4 for community engagement and 4 for administrative work, giving a total of 40 hours per week which is within the norm. There will, however, be deviations and variations from the norms, depending on the number of modules that an academic teaches. Workload of some staff will fall below the norm and that of others go beyond the norm.

The workload of Academic "A" who teaches one module per semester will be less than that of Academic "B" who teaches two modules per semester. Further, even if academics teach the same number of modules per semester or year, the time they spend on the preparation for teaching, teaching and marking will differ, depending on the size of the class.

This points to a need for setting a means of checking the real hours that a staff member will spends. This should be done by linking the teaching workload hours to the NQF credits of modules taught. For example a year course of 32 credits could give 320 hours at 10 hours per credit. If an academic teaches a class of a



100 and above, he/she could add 2 hours to the 10 hours which will then give 12 hours leading to 384 hours per year for the course. This should be discussed with the head of department.

There is also need to put a cut off point to ensure that there are no staff members who teach very small classes which are non-viable to teach. This will be guided by the level of the class. For first year courses a class of 30 should be acceptable as viable, 20 for second year and 10 for third and fourth year courses.

A factor to consider in determining the acceptable minimum number of students will be the level of the course in the funding grid. A level 4 course could accepted with a lower number than the 30 given above if it is able to attract some funding.

Table 4: Funding Grid

Funding groups by CESM categories: 2004/05 to 2006/07	
Funding group	CESM categories included in funding group
1	07 education, 13 law, 14 librarianship, 20 psychology, 21 social services/public administration
2	04 business/commerce, 05 communication, 06 computer science, 12 languages, 18 philosophy/religion, 22 social sciences
3	02 architecture/planning, 08 engineering, 10 home economics, 11 industrial arts, 16 mathematical sciences, 19 physical education
4	01 agriculture, 03 fine and performing arts, 09 health sciences, 15 life and physical sciences

Post graduate supervision should be considered as part of teaching rather than research.

Use of allotted workload hours for research will have to be backed up by the research units that the staff produces. The following guidelines will be used to ensure use of the hours allotted for research. The expected outputs from the different categories of academic staff are:



Professor:

A professor will be expected to produce 2 research units per year.

Associate Professor: Will be expected to produce 2 research units per year

Senior Lecturer:

- With PhD – 1.5. Research units per year.
- Without PhD – PhD Thesis, plus 2 research units in a period of 5 years.

Lecturer

- With PhD – 1 unit per year.
- With Masters Degree – A PhD thesis, plus 2 Units during a period of four years.
- Without a Masters degree – A Masters dissertation, plus 2 Units during a period of five years.

Junior Lecturer

- With a Masters – A PhD thesis, plus 1 Unit during a five-year period.
- Without a Masters – A Masters dissertation, plus 1 Unit during a period of five years.

Deviations and variations from the norms should be discussed with heads of departments.