

Teaching Expectations for Middlebury College Faculty November 2011

Fulfilling Middlebury College's mission requires a vibrant faculty whose goal and challenge is to be actively engaged in teaching while remaining productive as scholars. The Educational Affairs Committee has developed these teaching load guidelines to help ensure that, consistent with resource constraints, the talents and efforts of the faculty are deployed optimally and equitably for the benefit of students' education. The EAC recognizes the importance of guidelines that are flexible enough to adapt both to variations in pedagogy across disciplines and to potential future changes in pedagogical structure, such as growth in independent projects or senior work. Chairs and directors are expected to distribute teaching workloads equitably among all colleagues and are responsible for ensuring the efficient application of teaching resources; in all cases, faculty members' workloads must reflect curricular, departmental and/or programmatic needs. The EAC will review teaching loads annually with regard to equity among faculty members and efficient use of teaching resources. While no set of guidelines can capture perfectly the complexity of what faculty do, the EAC hopes these guidelines will give departments and programs with varying pedagogies the flexibility to focus on how best to educate our students.

Teaching responsibilities for full-time faculty members are guided by a balance of three measures, as follows: Full-time faculty members teach an average of 4.5 course preparations, 18 contact hours, and 90 enrolled students per academic year, as averaged over 4 years. All of these numbers represent a total of Fall, Winter, and Spring terms. Because of differences in pedagogy across disciplines, faculty teaching responsibilities can vary from these averages, provided that these variations maintain a balance between measures that are higher and lower than average. In particular, all faculty workloads, averaged over a four-year period and including all terms (Fall, Winter and Spring), should fall within the following ranges in all three categories:

- 3.5-5.5 *course preparations* per academic year
- 65-115 *enrolled students* per academic year
- 14-22 *contact hours* per academic year

Furthermore, faculty who are below the average in one of these measures by any significant amount should, at a minimum, be at or above the averages in both of the other two, and, to a corresponding extent, above the average in at least one.

Most commonly, faculty teach two courses during each Fall and Spring term, and a Winter Term course every other year. All full-time faculty must teach at least one course in every Fall and Spring Term.

Faculty whose teaching loads fall outside of these guidelines (in either direction) are expected to work with the Chair of their department or program, the Dean of the Faculty, and/or the Provost to chart a future teaching trajectory that is consistent with these guidelines.

Some faculty receive course releases because of additional responsibilities outside of their regular teaching. This document details some circumstances for course releases; others arise

from administrative responsibilities. In either case, a full course release reduces the above averages and ranges by 1 course preparation, 4 contact hours, and 20 students. (A *half* course release reduces each measure by half of these amounts.)

The definitions and procedures used to obtain the teaching measures described above are specified in more detail as follows:

- A *course preparation* is defined as a body of material taught in a specific term (Fall, Spring, or Winter) listed with a distinct number in the college catalogue. The same course taught in two distinct sections in any single term will count as a single course preparation (but with a correspondingly larger number of contact hours than a single section would). A course may include any combination of lectures, discussion sections, workshops, screenings or any other format that is best suited for teaching a particular subject.

A *laboratory* is defined as a distinct component of a course, composed of an essential set of scheduled activities involving data collection and analysis, that is, activities that cannot be incorporated into a normal lecture or discussion period. Laboratories provide opportunities for fieldwork, in-house experiments, or computer work, as appropriate for a particular field of study. Lab sections that require each student to meet for a minimum of three hours per week and are taught solely by the instructor count as 0.5 of a course preparation, independent of the total number of lab sections offered for that course. (For example: if a course has two three-hour lab sections, the instructor will receive credit for 0.5 of a course preparation. All the lab sections count toward the instructor's contact hours, however.) A course in which each student attends three 50 minute labs or two 75 minute labs per week also meets this criterion. In the case of a course where each student attends fewer than 150 minutes of lab per week, a faculty member may combine laboratory sections associated with multiple course preparations to reach the 150 minute threshold for a 0.5 course preparation. When a course is taught in multiple lab sections, on average each section should contain at least 9 students, except where enrollment is limited by available equipment.

- An *enrolled student* is defined as one student in a distinctly numbered course.
- A *contact hour* is defined as a 50-minute period in which a faculty member formally meets with students as scheduled by the college for required, interactive, credit-bearing academic pursuit. Film screenings, voluntary help sessions, self-scheduled review sessions, and other discretionary teaching commitments do not count as contact hours. Because of its different length and structure, a translation is necessary to make weekly contact hours in Winter Term comparable to those in the regular term. In particular, a standard Winter Term course meeting for 8-10 hours a week counts as 4 contact hours per year.

Furthermore:

- Because the teaching guidelines are given by the total over all three terms, *Winter Term courses* are comparable to Fall and Spring Term courses for the purposes of teaching workload, and thus faculty may teach a Fall or Spring Term course in lieu of a Winter Term course, or vice versa.
- *First-year seminars* are credited with one additional contact hour, representing the associated advising responsibilities.
- For a *team-taught course* in which both instructors participate fully in the course throughout the term, the course preparation, enrolled students, and contact hours are credited to *both* faculty members. Faculty for whom this teaching is not part of a contractual obligation normally will be limited to two such team-taught courses every five years, although the Dean of Faculty may grant exceptions to this policy. The needs of advanced laboratory courses may also necessitate regular team teaching. Faculty also may team-teach a course by dividing the responsibilities for the course (e.g., having each colleague lecture for half of the term), and in these cases each faculty member will receive credit for 0.5 preparations, half the total students, and half the total contact hours for the course; there is no limit on the number of courses that a faculty member can team-teach using this division of duty.
- *The minimum and maximum enrollment of courses* is left to the discretion of each department. Normally courses with more than 45 enrolled students will be offered only when major requirements, lecture format, and physical resources dictate that as the most effective pedagogy. Chairs are encouraged to plan course offerings that maximize department resources by balancing large and small course enrollments
- In order to encourage independent senior work, a one-semester *senior tutorial* of approximately 9 students will typically count as one course preparation and three contact hours (along with the actual number of enrolled students).
- The equivalent of **up to four** 700-level student credits of *independent senior work per academic year* is considered to be a normal part of a faculty member's workload (credit=1student, 1 term). Student credits of 700-level advising beyond the expected four may be banked for future course release. When a faculty member accumulates ten student credits of 700-level advising beyond the expected four per year, he or she may request a full course release in consultation with the department chair and program director. (Alternately, a faculty member may request a 0.5 course release after five credits of senior work beyond the expected four per year.) Departments or programs currently offering 700-level thesis seminars as courses counting toward a faculty member's teaching load may choose to continue offering those courses, but must waive teaching load credit for individual advising of independent senior work.
- A faculty member who *significantly surpasses* these general expectations (e.g., bears a disproportionately large share of the departmental teaching load or of supervision of independent work) may apply for one full course release over a five-year period.