

Northern Illinois University Statement on Faculty Workload

In 1969 (reaffirmed in 2000) the American Association of University Professors (AAUP, the oldest and foremost recognized and respected organization in higher education) adopted a statement on faculty workload focusing on the primary components of faculty work—teaching, research, and service. AAUP's statement noted that any description of faculty work in terms of hours per week of formal class meetings must recognize the enormity of time spent outside of the classroom in preparation (including a continuing effort in pursuit of original/exploratory inquiry within the discipline), grading of papers and examinations, assistance provided to remedial or advanced students in their classes, supervision of individualized independent study, incorporation of new materials or media, off-campus educational experiences, etc. With this in mind, AAUP provided national guidelines regarding faculty teaching loads which have become the national standard applied at universities throughout the nation.

The longstanding Northern Illinois University faculty workload policy is based on the AAUP standards:

1. Each college has a policy on teaching responsibilities formulated on a 12-hour course baseline.
2. The student's educational experience involves taking courses, receiving advising and mentoring, participating in campus activities, and having informal interactions with faculty. Courses taken by students involve classroom lectures, laboratories, off-campus experiences, scholarly experiences, and theses and dissertation work.

Therefore, each faculty 3-hour course assignment requires a minimum of a 12-hour commitment by the faculty member. This commitment involves preparation, lecturing, one-on-one interactions with students, evaluation and grading, advising and mentoring, and a scholarly commitment that keeps a faculty member updated and enthusiastic and instills excellence in the educational mission.

3. Some faculty also have a service/outreach commitment to the community. This commitment is part of the educational/teaching mission of the university, but faculty receive no formal credit for these activities. Over the past 40 years, the public and especially the Northern Illinois Region expectation for service and outreach has grown significantly.
4. Collectively these commitments, starting with the 12-hour course baseline, lead to faculty work weeks in excess of 40 hours and often 50 or more hours.