

MEMORANDUM

DATE: April 16, 2004

TO: Psychology Faculty

FROM: Ronald W. Belter, Ph.D.
Chairperson, Department of Psychology

RE: Department Policy on Faculty Workloads

In your mailbox, you will find copies of 2 documents related to faculty work assignments. The first is a memo dated June 6, 1990 with the "Official Psychology Policy Concerning course 'Credit' for Unsupervised Teaching and Released Time". The second document is the "Faculty Workload Options Plan" for the college, implemented in the fall term of 1996. In recent years, it has become apparent that there are some inconsistencies between these two policies, and inconsistencies in how these policies have been applied in the department.

For example, there are several people in the department with modified work options that were informally established with no documentation. This requires more formal procedure and documentation, with clearer performance expectations related to the work option. Our policy from 1990 also indicates that requests for course release are considered each semester, which is not really feasible, given the fact that work assignments are done annually. This needs to be cleaned up for clarity and consistency with the existing CAS workload options plan. It's an area of department administration that needs to be tightened up for accountability and equity. We need to re-establish the normal, expected teaching load for the department. We need to re-establish the regular procedure for crediting people for their unscheduled teaching. We need to establish a clear policy for crediting distance learning and courses less than 3sh. We need to support non-tenured faculty efforts to achieve tenure.

All this points to a need for a new department policy to establish and implement clear criteria and expectations for workload and performance, consistent with the college workload options plan and the current department culture.

I have drafted a revised department policy to establish this goal. The Executive Committee has reviewed and modified this policy for presentation to the faculty. This item is on the agenda for the April 23 faculty meeting. Please review this document carefully for discussion and action at the faculty meeting.

DRAFT Psychology Department Policy on Faculty Teaching Workloads DRAFT

Within the guidelines of the College of Arts and Sciences Faculty Workload Options Plan and the statement on department culture, the Psychology Department has established the following policy for faculty teaching workloads. This policy includes the procedures for requesting and approving release from the normal, expected teaching load defined in the faculty member's approved work option. It also defines the conditions for approved release, with a decision to approve release only if department needs and resources allow.

I. Standard Workload. In keeping with the CAS Workload Options Plan, each faculty member's workload is the Standard Option, unless an alternate workload option has been requested and approved according to the CAS Workload Options Plan. The Standard Option is an assignment of 60% of the faculty member's effort with a teaching load of three courses (9sh) per semester.

II. Administrative Release: Limited release from teaching in the Standard Option assignment will be included with assignment to the following administrative roles in the department:

A. Department Chairperson. The chair of the department will have a 12 month contract with assignment to teach 3 courses during the 12 month contract period, usually one course per Fall and Spring semester, and one course to be taught in the summer. This amounts to release from 2 courses per semester in Fall and Spring.

B. Department Associate Chairperson: The associate chair of the department will have release from a maximum of one course per semester, in a 9 month contract.

C. Counseling Track Coordinator: The coordinator of the counseling track will have release from one course in a 9 month contract.

D. I/O Track Coordinator: The coordinator of the I/O track will have release from one course in a 9 month contract.

E. Fort Walton Beach Coordinator: The coordinator of the department's programs on the FWB campus will have release from one course in a 9 month contract.

III. Research Release: Formal release from teaching for assignment to additional research activity will ordinarily occur according to the provisions of the CAS Workload Options Plan, with the Modified Option. Limited release from teaching in a given year will be considered and approved under unusual circumstances for faculty under the Standard Option, only if department needs and resources allow. When approved, any release from teaching will include a specific adjustment in the work assignment performance expectation for research productivity, commensurate with the equivalent Modified Option in the CAS Workload Options Plan. The circumstances in which a formal Modified Work Option or a limited release from teaching in the Standard Work Option may be considered are as follows:

A. Extramurally-Funded Research: A faculty member who has a grant funded in which

salary for the faculty member is included, may buy-out his/her teaching assignment at the rate of 12.5% of the faculty member's salary for each course, during the period in which the grant provides funding for faculty salary. Release for extramurally funded research would include proportional release from related duties such as advising, department committees, and other similar service obligations.

B. Intramurally-Supported Research: A faculty member who has research activity supported by intramural sources (e.g. IHMC, Intergovernmental Personnel Agreement), may buy-out his/her teaching assignment at the rate of 12.5% of the faculty member's salary for each course, during the contract period. Intramurally supported research does not include release from duties such as advising, department committees, and other similar service obligations.

C. Non-Funded Research: A faculty member who has demonstrated unusual research productivity may request a Modified Workload Option or limited release from teaching to support continued research productivity, if department needs and resources allow.

D. Tenure Preparation: In consideration of the need for non-tenured faculty to establish a strong research record in preparation for submitting a tenure application portfolio, a non-tenured faculty member in a tenure-earning line may request release from one course in an academic year for the purpose of focusing attention on submission of manuscripts for review for publication. Such release is limited to one lifetime request only and must be taken in the 3rd or 4th year of the faculty member's eligibility for tenure. For such a request to be approved, the faculty member must provide evidence of scholarly work that is nearing completion for which the release time would facilitate manuscript preparation and/or revision.

IV. Service Release: Limited release from teaching for assignment to additional professional service activity will be considered and approved under unusual circumstances for faculty under the Standard or Modified Options, only if department needs and resources allow. When approved, any release from teaching will include a specific adjustment in the work assignment performance expectation for service productivity, commensurate with the equivalent Modified Option in the CAS Workload Options Plan. The circumstances in which a limited release from teaching may be considered are as follows:

A. Funded Professional Service: A faculty member who has a funded professional service contract in which salary for the faculty member is included, may buy-out his/her teaching assignment at the rate of 12.5% of the faculty member's salary for each course, during the period in which the service contract provides funding for faculty salary.

B. Non-Funded Professional Service: A faculty member who has unusual professional service obligations may request a Modified Workload Option or limited release from teaching to support continued professional service, if department needs and resources allow. Examples of such service would include serving as a journal editor, as executive officer or president of a major professional organization, or other significant professional activity that requires substantial investment of time to justify release from teaching.

C. University Governance: A faculty member who has unusual university service obligations may request a Modified Workload Option or limited release from teaching to support continued professional service, if department needs and resources allow. Examples of such service would include serving as president of the faculty senate, or other significant service activity that requires substantial investment of time to justify release from teaching.

V. Release for Unscheduled Teaching: Each faculty member is expected to engage in unscheduled teaching activity such as serving as chairperson or member of thesis and internship committees, sponsoring student service learning, and directing independent directed studies. Because of the additional responsibilities involved in chairing a thesis or internship committee, limited release from teaching for assignment to additional unscheduled teaching activity will be considered and approved for faculty under the Standard or Modified Workload Options under the following conditions:

A. Chairing three internship committees is considered to be equivalent to chairing one thesis committee.

B. Chairing four theses or the equivalent number of internships, in any combination, through to completion is considered to be equivalent to one course (3sh).

C. Credit for chairing a thesis or internship committee will be achieved upon receipt of the final bound copy of the thesis or internship portfolio/paper in the department.

VI. Procedure for Requesting a Modified Work Option or Limited Release from Teaching: Depending on department needs, department resources, and expectations for department teaching productivity set by the Dean of the college, a Modified Work Option or limited release from teaching may be approved through the following procedures.

A. A written proposal (2-3 pages) must be submitted by the faculty member to the department Executive Committee, identifying the specific work option or amount of limited release requested, time frame, justification, and additional performance expectations to be met. The request should provide documentation of a strong foundation of relevant research, service, or unscheduled teaching activity and productivity prior to the request, as evidence of probable success in meeting the additional research, service, or teaching performance expectations if the release is approved. The written proposal must be received by the Executive Committee before March 1.

B. The department chairperson will provide the Executive Committee a report on department resources, expectations for teaching productivity, and tentative course schedule for the coming year, before March 1.

C. The faculty member's written proposal will be evaluated by the department Executive Committee, which will weigh the merits of the request in the context of departmental resources and expectations for teaching productivity, and make a recommendation for action by the department chairperson before the end of March.

D. The chairperson will consider the recommendation of the Executive Committee and inform the faculty member of the decision to approve or disapprove the request, with an explanation for the decision, before work assignments for the next academic year are written.

E. A formal request for limited release, based on course credit accrued for unscheduled teaching or distance learning, may only be denied under circumstances of unusual department need and limited resources, and must be approved for the following academic year.

VII. Minimum Teaching Assignment: The minimum approved teaching assignment for any faculty member, with the exception of the department chairperson, will be a Modified Work Option, or its equivalent, with an assignment of 40% of the faculty member's effort with a teaching load of 2 courses per semester. Only under unusual circumstances, approved by the department Executive Committee, department chairperson, and college Dean, can a faculty member's teaching assignment be less than 40% of the faculty member's effort.

VIII. Distribution of Teaching Workload: Under normal circumstances, in the Standard Workload Option, a faculty member's teaching workload will be distributed evenly over the Fall and Spring semesters. When a faculty member's approved teaching workload involves an odd number of courses (e.g. 3/2), the teaching assignment will be distributed over the Fall and Spring semesters according to departmental needs and available resources, and in consultation with the faculty member. Under unusual circumstances, a faculty member's teaching workload may be distributed in uneven fashion across the Fall and Spring semesters, subject to approval of the department Executive Committee and department chairperson. In consideration of an implicit contract that was endorsed by the department in 1990 for a specific senior faculty member, that agreement for an uneven distribution of teaching workload across the Fall and Spring semesters, for that particular person, is regarded as having prior approval of the Executive Committee and chairperson.

IX. Credit for Distance Learning and Other Courses: A course taught by a faculty member who is based at the main campus, for students at the Fort Walton Beach campus or through the distance learning lab, will be credited as the equivalent of 1.5 course. When a faculty member teaches two such courses in the same semester, it will be considered the equivalent of 3 courses, without a need to formally request release from a teaching assignment. When two such courses are taught as part of the faculty member's regular course teaching load across two semesters, the additional 1 course credit can be accrued as the basis for a formal request for release from 1 course in the same or following academic year.

Courses taught for less than 3sh credit will not be considered the equivalent of a course taught for 3sh credit. Credit for teaching such courses, above a faculty member's normal teaching workload can be accrued as the basis for a formal request for release from a course.

X. Deferral of Teaching Release: A faculty member may defer, or accrue credit for, teaching release for the future, but this must be approved by the department Executive Committee and department chairperson in consideration of department needs and resources. A faculty member may not accrue or defer release for more than one course at any time, unless a request submitted

to use this credit is denied due to departmental need and/or limited resources. If a faculty member fails to request use of this credit within two years, according to this policy, the credit will be forfeited.