Faculty Teaching Load Restructuring
December 2014

Objective

Move all full-time faculty members to a 3-3 teaching load. A 3-3 teaching load is defined as the equivalent of teaching three 3-contact hour courses each semester. This will be accomplished by applying threshold enrollment criteria, staggering undersubscribed course offerings, using part-time faculty, rewarding full-time faculty who choose to teach more than 3-3, and adding full-time faculty.

Framework

Teaching Load

A full teaching load is 5-5 with no course release. A 5-5 load is equivalent to teaching five 3-contact hour courses per semester. For a full academic year, this is the equivalent of teaching ten 3-contact hour courses. The Faculty Handbook defines a full semester teaching load as a 5-5, normally taken as "four courses plus credit for one course for committee work [professional citizenship], advising [cadet development], etc." This equates to a 4-4 teaching load and nearly all departments are currently meeting this model, which was established prior to the development of the four domains for faculty performance.

The optimal teaching load for full-time faculty is 3-3 which allows 2-2 course release to pursue scholarly engagement as well as professional citizenship and cadet development. The department head teaching load is 2-2, allowing one additional course release. Some departments are currently meeting this model, or would meet this model under defined constraints. With a 3-3 teaching load, faculty members will typically not be granted additional release time to pursue special interests or activities unless sponsored by faculty development funds.

Department heads are responsible for maintaining a balance among all faculty teaching loads in their departments. Department heads have the discretion of allowing faculty members in their departments to schedule 4-2 or 2-4 options, so long as the 3-3 equivalent is realized over the full academic year.

For balancing departmental teaching loads, courses taught outside faculty members' departments to support Institute-wide minors or academic enrichment, such as Science & Security and Honors, are not included. However, members of the faculty can influence their teaching loads by selective participation in Institute-wide minor courses offerings, through cross-departmental appointments, or by accepting overloads in their departments.

Teaching overload courses is voluntary for full-time faculty and, at the option of the faculty member, will be rewarded by either 1) one contact hour release after accumulating three contact hours of overload, 2) $200 per contact hour with one contact hour release after accumulating 4 contact hours of overload, or 3) $850 per contact hour of overload. These options will give faculty flexibility in how they choose to be rewarded for accepting a teaching overload and will allow periodic opportunities for faculty to realize substantially reduced course loads.[1] Department heads will track accumulated course release hours for their faculty.

[1] For example, a faculty member who would normally teach a 4-2 could take a course release in the second semester that would reduce his or her teaching load to 4-1. Multiple scenarios exist to realize these reduced load opportunities and faculty members would coordinate these directly with their department heads. For others, choosing to continue with a 4-4 load would allow them to realize a $5,100 annual increase in their pay. In every case, however, individual faculty members are free to choose whether or not to teach an overload and how they wish

Threshold Enrollment

All courses or sections offered must meet a threshold enrollment. The threshold constraint may require combining multiple sections or staggering offerings over more than one year. Courses that consistently fail to meet threshold enrollment should be re-evaluated. Elective offerings and new courses should be carefully considered against the threshold criteria.

The VMI summer program uses a threshold of 10 for 100 and 200-level courses and seven for 300 and 400-level courses. The proposed threshold criteria for the normal academic year are:

> For core curriculum courses (excluding capstone courses), service courses, and for departments with total majors in any of the 1st through 4th Classes greater than 15 cadets:
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> > 100 and 200-level threshold is nine
> > 300 and 400-level threshold is seven
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> For non-core curriculum and non-service courses in departments with total majors in any of the 1st through 4th Classes less than or equal to 15 cadets, the threshold is the greater of either four cadets or:
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> > 100 and 200-level threshold is 60%, rounded up, of total Class size in the major
> > 300 and 400-level threshold is 45%, rounded up, of total Class size in the major

Future discussions will need to address the need to cap individual course enrollment to prevent large sections and to ensure that faculty loads are not reduced at the expense of smaller class sizes.

Credits and Contact Hours

Contact hours are based on the level-of-effort that would normally be expected to meet the curricular demands of the course. This includes preparation time, classroom/lab time, and grading and office time. Determining the time commitments for each of these is based on the reasonable expectation for a typical professor teaching a combination of courses, some of which may be multiple sections of the same course. Some courses include a lecture sequence and a lab, and for determining contact hours, these courses are divided into their lecture and lab components.

Credit hours are converted to contact hours according to the following guidelines:

- For lecture courses of all configurations, one credit hour equals one contact hour regardless of the scheduled in-class time.
- One-half credit PE courses count as one contact hour, and the one-credit PE 300 course counts as two contact hours.
- For experiential laboratory courses or labs associated with courses, two hours in lab count 1.5 contact hours, three hours in lab count 2.0 contact hours, and four or more hours in lab count 2.5 contact hours.[2]

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to be rewarded when they chose to do so. A sample scenario of how release time associated with overloads might be accumulated is provided in Attachment A.

[2] Exceptions to allow one-to-one contact hours for lab hours, up to a maximum of three contact hours, may be granted where justified by special circumstances. Requests for case-by-case exceptions must be true exceptions and will be submitted through the Dean to the Curriculum and Instruction Committee. The Committee should consider

- For lecture courses with associated experiential labs, one lecture hour equals one contact hour and two hours in lab count 1.5 contact hours, three hours in lab count 2.0 contact hours, and four or more hours in lab count 2.5 contact hours.
- For team-taught courses, the contact load hours, as defined above, will be divided amongst the faculty participants, as agreed upon by the participants and their department heads. Exceptions to this policy may be initiated by the faculty members teaching the course, in conjunction with their department head(s), with final approval coming from the Dean of Faculty.

For lecture courses with associated labs, there may be cases where a single lecture section has multiple associated lab sections. Where such cases occur, the contact hours for each lab section are counted separately to determine contact hours. For example a (3-3-4) lecture section that has two separate associated lab sections would count as three lecture contact hours plus four lab contact hours (2 contact hours x 2 lab sections) for a total of seven contact hours.

Teaching loads do not directly include independent study, or capstone courses configured as independent study, in the semester that it occurs, primarily due to threshold enrollment. Instead, teaching load credit for independent study will accumulate until academic credit is awarded for five semesters of individual or team cadet work at which time it will be included in the teaching load as a 3-contact hour equivalent and a faculty member may apply the overload criteria.

Teaching loads do not include HN100 courses. Faculty members who lead these discussions are compensated separately through the Honors Program.

Adjunct Faculty

It is expected that most departments will use adjunct faculty to reduce full-time teaching loads and to allow flexibility as enrollment fluctuates.[3] Use of adjuncts requires demonstrating the need against alternatives. The minimum criteria to justify adjuncts are:

- The teaching load for all full-time department faculty members is 3-3 (department heads is 2-2)
- All full-time faculty are provided the priority option of teaching a course overload
- All sections meet the threshold enrollment

As departments develop increased dependence on part-time faculty, options for adding full-time faculty will be evaluated.

Implementation

The procedure to determine course offerings and adjunct needs follows.

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that labs or labs associated with courses are mostly one credit with very few others at 1.5 credits and that the level-of-effort for all courses should be based on a typical faculty member in the department working efficiently, not on individual work characteristics or preferences. With this in mind, requests for exemptions should provide full justification with appropriate documentation to make a clear case that an exception is warranted. Exceptions, where granted, will continue as long as the conditions justifying exceptions remain valid. Departments have the responsibility to cancel exceptions and adhere to the basic guidelines for those courses where conditions no longer justify continuing exceptions.

[3] Adjunct faculty may be scheduled to teach the equivalent of up to four 3-contact hour sections.

1. By the last Friday in February, department heads will submit preliminary part-time faculty budget requests. These should be based on the total courses to be taught and the number of sections throughout the next academic year and should consider enrollment thresholds, class size, adjunct and overload implications, and impacts on teaching loads.

2. As part of the scheduling activities for fall and spring preregistration, department heads will make best estimates of adjunct faculty needs for the coming semester. The needs analysis should show that the 3-3 teaching load is satisfied for all faculty members, with appropriate adjustments, and that faculty members have had the opportunity to exercise their overload option. Individual adjunct faculty members may be scheduled to teach up to the equivalent of four 3-contact hour courses. Contracts for adjunct faculty will be prepared based on these estimated needs, but will be contingent upon meeting threshold enrollment and availability of full-time faculty.

3. In advance of preregistration, academic advisors will need to ensure that they speak to each of their advisees to help them develop a full schedule for preregistration and to stress the need to complete preregistration during the preregistration period. Cadets who fail to preregister for a full schedule will be reported to the Commandant by the Registrar and will to subject to a substantial bone. A successful preregistration is very important to our ability to accurately meet course demand and to balance course loads.

4. At the close of preregistration, courses or sections that fail to meet enrollment thresholds will be cancelled. Alternatively, selected courses may be combined or cancelled to increase enrollment in others. Where courses scheduled to be taught by full-time faculty fail to meet the threshold and the consequent equivalent teaching load for those faculty falls below 3-3, full-time faculty will be expected to teach courses or sections originally scheduled for adjunct faculty and the adjunct faculty will be released from their contract for that course or section. This will require some flexibility among faculty preferences, course offerings, and sections sizes.

5. Cadets will use the registration day just prior to the first day of classes to make schedule adjustments required by cancelled courses or sections.

Attachment A
Sample Teaching Overload Credit Scenario

Semester	Course Overload	Pay	Release Credit	Cumulative Release Credit
FL 10	3 contact-hours	$0	1.00	1.00
SP 11	3 contact-hours	$600	0.75	1.75
FL 11	3 contact-hours	$600	0.75	2.50
FL 12	3 contact-hours	$2550	0.00	2.50
SP 13	3 contact-hours	$600	0.75	3.25
FL 13	Faculty member exercises course release		-3.00	0.25