

FAC COMMITTEE/WORKING GROUP ON FACULTY TEACHING AND THE PROMISE (CFTAP)

POLICY PROPOSAL (1/14/14; Endorsed by FAS 2/4/14)

Arts and Sciences is the heart of the College of William & Mary and central to the goal of building life-long connections with our students. The William & Mary Promise commits the College to further increasing Arts and Sciences enrollments by an additional 150 undergraduate students over the next four years in addition to prior agreements concerning transfer and St. Andrews students.

In the face of increasing enrollments, we must be strategic if we are to maintain our national reputation as the top public university for undergraduate teaching (US News and World Report, 2013). The challenge facing us over the next five years is to reach a balance that facilitates the increase in instructional needs created by the expansion while preserving our tradition of excellence in undergraduate teaching and research. We have a range of options available to us to accomplish this: adding new sections to existing courses; creating new courses, including those for the new curriculum; and increasing the size of existing courses. We note that increasing formal classroom teaching by faculty will reduce the time available for engagement with students in research and other creative activities outside of the classroom. Additional classroom teaching also comes at a significant cost to research productivity and the faculty's ability to compete for external funding. Thus, hiring additional faculty will be required.

The Arts and Sciences faculty have embraced a teacher-scholar model for sustaining the challenging liberal arts and sciences undergraduate curriculum prescribed by the College's mission statement. Our scholarship directly informs our teaching, and our research activities engage students in learning outside of the classroom. Our teacher-scholar model, and our related commitment to dynamically involve undergraduates in research, is rare in higher education. Our commitment to the teacher-scholar model is one of our most distinctive qualities, and deserves to be well supported.

Acknowledging the work the Board of Visitors has done to enhance the teaching and learning environment for students and faculty at William & Mary, we respectfully recommend the following policies.

1. DOCUMENTING ENGAGEMENT OUTSIDE OF THE CLASSROOM

When assessing teaching, each department or program should have a means to evaluate the full range of faculty-student engagement. Each department or program should determine the experiences that are considered valuable and transformative and create the means to capture, record, and count them in merit evaluations.

Recognizing that some faculty teach throughout the year, and that summer school and study abroad play a vital role in the education of our undergraduate body, summer teaching and teaching abroad (through formal study abroad programs, supervised field research, and/or faculty mentored service learning opportunities) should be included under the rubric of teaching activities and should contribute to the teaching merit score within each department's merit system.

2. FLEXIBLE MERIT SYSTEM

Arts and Sciences should adopt a policy of flexible merit evaluation for tenured faculty. Under such a policy, tenured faculty would have the option of choosing to weight teaching more heavily in their annual merit review, provided they agree to increased teaching responsibilities.

Such additional instructional work could include teaching an additional course during the academic year, teaching summer school, teaching in a William & Mary study abroad program, or extra instructional activity beyond the normal instructional load of the faculty (multiple honors theses, student research projects, etc.). Tenured faculty wishing to alter the 6-6-3 ratio should make the request in advance of the year pertaining, and may only alter the ratio when there is agreement between the faculty member in question, the chair and/or program director in consultation with the department and/or program and the Dean.

On the question of limits of re-weighting: the number of points allotted to teaching should not rise above 9 and they may not go below 5. Similarly, points allotted to governance should vary between the norm of 3 and a maximum of 5. In cases where teaching, research and service points are moved from the 6-6-3 norm, new expectations in these areas should be clarified in writing. Research components should not be reduced below a minimum of 3 as an indication that all faculty are expected to be scholars as well as teachers, consistent with our College mission statement.

3. COMPENSATED TEACHING OVERLOADS FOR FULL-TIME CONTINUING NTE FACULTY

Only senior lecturers or lecturers on multi-year contracts who have strong teaching records for the previous two consecutive years may apply to teach an overload course. Any additional course taught by NTE faculty during the academic year must be compensated with a stipend at least equivalent to rates set for summer school teaching.

NTE faculty apply for such overloads through their departments or programs, which after vetting these proposals, forward the requests to the Dean of Arts and Sciences with the department chair or program director's approval. The minimum enrollment for any additional courses taught should be determined by the department or program needs and approved by the appropriate administrators.

4. PROMOTING FACULTY-STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Student involvement in faculty research and other creative, artistic activities provides a mutually rewarding experience for both students and faculty. The level of student involvement in faculty projects has been increasing over time. Involving more students in student-faculty scholarly collaboration in order to reach the *majority* of the student body over the span of their undergraduate career should be an important goal of the College. Even though students involved in scholarly activities gain from the experience, their participation incurs substantial costs in materials and travel, among other expenses. More financial support for this high level of student-faculty engaged learning is needed. We suggest enhancing the Charles Center program of faculty-student collaborations through additional funds provided by the Dean's and Provost's offices as well as specific Development initiatives to raise funds for this endeavor. Faculty, student, or the faculty-student team would apply through a competitive process to receive funds to support collaborative scholarly activities through the Charles Center.

5. RE-EVALUATION

Re-evaluation of these proposed changes should be conducted in three years to determine whether the goals of the proposal are being met and whether any unintended consequences (i.e., lower research productivity, student dissatisfaction) have resulted in response to these new policies.