

Workload Policy for School of Health Sciences

Approved by SHS Academic Advisory Committee – 10/22/08

Approved by Health Sciences Assembly – 12/5/08

Approved by Oakland University

The School of Health Sciences (SHS) is comprised of Health Sciences, Physical Therapy, Exercise Science, Occupational Safety and Health, Medical Laboratory Sciences, and Wellness, Health Promotion and Injury Prevention Programs. Perhaps unique to SHS is the diversity of both clinical and academic pursuits of our faculty who serve students in a variety of undergraduate, graduate and doctoral programs. The workload policy for SHS integrates the School's vision to provide an exceptional environment of collaborative, academic and clinical learning that helps transform students into leaders impacting the health needs of our communities in diverse wellness and health-related practices.

Teaching, scholarly activities and service form the basis of faculty duties and responsibilities at Oakland University. Program Directors are responsible for carrying out the School's mission in providing students with the best science-based health education, high-quality academic preparation, interdisciplinary teaching and excellence in instruction in the classroom and clinical laboratory. Workload includes faculty's diverse and ever-changing role in multiple categories: clinical, educational and bench research; clinical instruction in external laboratories and centers in the community where students are encouraged (or mandated) to complete internships requisite for graduation; creative activities that enhance both student experiences and contributions to the community; teaching both didactic and clinical, time-intense hands-on laboratory techniques unique to the clinical environment; and, service to the Programs, University and diverse health-care professional community.

The academic and clinical experiences vary from program to program and, thus, there are extensive differences between and within each program that require flexibility in the School's workload policy. The proportions and balance of teaching, scholarship and service must be determined by Program Directors and their faculty in consultation and with the approval of the Dean. The workload policy is and must remain consistent with current and future criteria for tenure and promotions as already approved by the Health Sciences Assembly and the Provost and Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs. The varying workload balance among the three components should be adjusted to match goals for each faculty, particularly for tenure-track faculty before tenure, as overseen by Program Directors and the Dean.

The needs of each program are best determined by individual Program Directors in consultation with the Dean so as to best fulfill its commitment to students to provide the best balance of academic, clinical and instructional services. To this end, teaching loads should be determined by the credit/contact hours taught. The normal teaching 'load' in SHS is 20 credit/contact hours per academic year. Teaching also includes many diverse activities such as advising, providing hands-on clinical instruction on a one-to-one basis, upgrading and improving old courses to maintain current healthcare professional standards, developing new courses and on-line components, and overseeing new minors and majors that are developed.

Activities, in part, that may directly affect workload balance of an individual faculty member, as documented in the SHS Merit system, include (but are not limited to): teaching very large classes; teaching classes with significant clinical instruction; participating in grant projects; directing a program; coordinating selected major/minor programs for the School; supervision of special projects in the School or Program or Prevention Research Center in the School; supervision of dissertations and/or required graduation tests, comprehensive exams or theses; leadership activities in national or international organizations beyond normal service expectations; teaching activities that by nature of the course involve significant research (translational, clinical, or educational) activities/projects, and accreditation/re-accreditation activities. All of these work factors must be considered when evaluating realistic faculty workloads in professional educational systems that are dynamic and intensive.