

Workload Policy in the Department of History

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It is assumed that every tenured and tenure-track member of the Department of History will have a workload that includes substantial efforts in scholarship, teaching, and service. The actual distribution of effort in these three areas will change for each faculty member over time, and will certainly vary across the department. However, over time each faculty member should have a career that is marked by a rough balance in terms of devoting energy to scholarship, teaching, and service.

Special lecturers will have a workload that consists only of teaching obligations as defined by the faculty contract.

Scholarship

It is expected that faculty members are always engaged in at least one major research project. Faculty members are free to define their own research agendas, including scope and pace toward completion. These projects will normally end in the publication of a book or scholarly article, but may also include intermediary presentations such as conference papers. It is recognized that occasionally the pressure of this research is unusually great; at those times the department chair should lessen that faculty member's teaching and service duties temporarily, as long as such a reduction does not harm the ability of the department to complete necessary functions.

Under terms of the faculty contract, faculty may use sabbatical leaves and professional development and research leaves to further their research agendas. In addition, faculty may apply for a leave without pay to further a research agenda. However, it is understood that these leaves do affect the department's workload and should not be frequent or last more than one academic year.

The department also values other academic scholarly pursuits, such as writing book reviews, serving as reviewers for manuscripts, and consulting for museums and documentaries. These sorts of projects are useful in strengthening the historian's recognition in the field, and will in the long run benefit the reputation of the department and Oakland University.

Without requiring it, the department values engagement with the public and applauds efforts such as delivering public speeches or writing editorials. The department also values the efforts of its members to strengthen organizations that are dedicated to the expansion of the humanities. It is important that department members provide their scholarly expertise to external humanities and educational group.

Teaching

Because of the expectations of extensive work in service and scholarship, the maximum teaching load for tenured and tenure-track faculty is five courses spread across Fall and Winter. The department strives for uniformity of teaching assignments across the tenure-track faculty; there are no “research specialists” and no “teaching specialists.” Ultimately, the responsibility for determining the teaching schedule for each faculty member rests with the department chair.

Normally, special lecturers will only be required to teach general education knowledge explorations courses but may teach other courses depending on department need.

A typical semester’s course load for tenured and tenure-track faculty will be comprised of one general education knowledge explorations course (either HST or IS courses) and one or two upper level history courses in the faculty member’s specialty. If the need for upper division courses is great, some faculty members may be asked to substitute an upper division course for a general education knowledge explorations course. Faculty may request to teach part of their load in another program, such as the Honors College, but the chair may deny that request.

As is the practice of the College of Arts and Sciences, the undergraduate adviser for the department will have one course release per year to compensate for the time involved in advising. In addition, the chair of the department will have three course releases during the academic year (a 1:1 teaching load) to compensate for the time involved in chairing the department. Those members of the faculty on administrative assignments will have course load reductions according to university policy. Other members of the department may receive course releases to accommodate extraordinary burdens in other workload areas, as long as such a reduction does not harm the ability of the department to deliver a sufficient range of courses.

Because of the nature of the discipline, the department requires that a substantial portion of the grading for every class be based on essay writing. This is especially the case with 300- and 400-level classes. The writing intensive nature of history courses at every level thus creates a heavy grading load for faculty. Accordingly, the section sizes need to be limited to facilitate the heavier burden of grading writing assignments. Courses at the 100 level are limited to 55 students; courses at the 200 level are limited to 40 students; HST 300 and the senior capstones are limited to 15 students; graduate seminars are limited to 10 students; and all other courses are limited to 25 undergraduates (in “slash” courses there will be up to 5 additional graduate students and in “cross listed” courses there will be up to 5 additional undergraduate students). The instructor has the prerogative to alter the balance of students in the slash and cross listed courses if the chair concurs. The instructor may increase the number of enrolled students beyond the normal limits, as long as grading standards can be maintained.

The teaching schedule for the department will be determined in the following manner. Approximately one month before the schedule is due at the Dean’s office, all faculty members will be asked to provide the chair with a written request for his/her teaching schedule. As much as possible, these requests will be respected. However, the chair may require changes in days, times, and courses taught. In the event that a faculty member is asked to make substantial concessions in the teaching schedule, the chair will make special accommodation to meet that faculty member’s requests for the next academic year. Regardless of seniority, all faculty members occasionally may be required to teach early in the day, late in the afternoon, and in the evening. No faculty member can be required to teach off campus. No faculty member can be required to participate in online programs.

Tenured and tenure-track faculty may elect to teach undergraduate and/or graduate tutorials. Special lecturers must request the chair's approval before agreeing to teach an undergraduate tutorial; they may not teach graduate tutorials. Work with students in a tutorial is done without financial compensation or a reduction in the rest of the teaching load. If a faculty member agrees to lead a tutorial, he/she must submit a student tutorial contract to the department chair at the beginning of the term.

Only tenured and tenure-track faculty may serve on MA thesis and comprehensive examination committees. Faculty who serve on these committees do so at their discretion. It is recognized that occasionally the pressure of this graduate student supervision is unusually great; at those times the department chair should lessen that faculty member's other teaching and service duties temporarily, as long as such a reduction does not harm the ability of the department to complete necessary functions.

Graduate students are responsible for making arrangements for their defense or examination, including determining the semester it will take place and finding two members of the history faculty who will agree to serve as examiners. If the schedule for an MA thesis defense or comprehensive exam has changed from the originally negotiated semester, participating faculty members are under no obligation to continue on the committee.

Teaching in summer school is optional and normally is considered as an overload assignment. (Faculty may request to teach one of their normal five courses in the spring or summer terms so that they may teach a 2:2 load during the regular year.) Tenured and tenure-track faculty will not be scheduled for more than one course in the spring/summer of each year. Both the undergraduate adviser and the chair are guaranteed a spring/summer course. In the event that there are not enough classes available for all other tenured or tenure-track faculty members who wish to teach, those who have not taught recently in the spring/summer will have priority. Special lecturers may teach two courses in the spring/summer if sufficient sections are available to provide all special lecturers with at least one course. Assignment of additional courses for special lecturers will be based on seniority.

Service

Special lecturers are not expected to perform any service duties for the department.

Tenured and tenure-track members of the department are expected to develop an active service record after the first year at Oakland. (First year tenure-track faculty are discouraged from taking on any service duties in the first year.)

Service is viewed as work in faculty governance (including but not limited to departmental committees, college committees, university committees, and the AAUP), service to the academic community (including but not limited to professional organizations, academic publishers, and state and local historical societies), and service to the broader community. Faculty members are permitted to determine their own focus in terms of service, though all are expected to provide some service to the department.

At the beginning of the academic year the chair will ask each tenured and tenure-track member their departmental committee preferences. In addition, each member will provide a list of external service obligations. From this information, the chair will assign faculty members to

departmental committees. These assignments will be made to spread service work evenly throughout the department and to broaden administrative experience within the department.

Faculty who are on sabbatical or other type of leave (with or without pay) will not be expected to meet their service obligations. Faculty who are on reduced load will have their service obligations lowered.