

Workload Policy in the Department of Physics
February 14, 2013

It is expected that every tenured and tenure track member of the Department of Physics will have a workload that includes substantial efforts in research, teaching and service.

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

Research

It is expected that every tenured or tenure track member of the Department of Physics is engaged in a substantial program of research. Such a research program should result in a set of publications in peer reviewed journals appropriate to the faculty member's field of study. Contributed chapters in books are also appropriate, though not required. It is also expected that faculty will present their research results in seminars and colloquia at other institutions, as well as at regional, national, or international physics conferences. It is expected that each faculty member will obtain, or at least apply for, research funding from external agencies.

The Department of Physics regards quality of research as even more important than quantity of research. Though judgments of quality are necessarily subjective, there are certain indicators of quality in physics research. The most important of these is funding, especially from Federal agencies, such as NIH and NSF. Other indicators include (but are not limited to) prestige of the journals that the faculty member's publications appear in, number of times that the publications are cited, and invitations to give talks about the research at other institutions and at meetings, especially national and international meetings. In addition, there are many professional service activities where being invited to participate in the activity is an indication of one's standing in the field and thus of the quality of one's research. These include (but are not limited to) refereeing journal articles, refereeing grant proposals both individually and as part of a panel, being an external examiner for PhD theses from other institutions, being an officer in a professional organization, and being on the editorial board of a peer reviewed journal. There is no expectation that an individual faculty member should possess all of these indicators of research quality; but there should be enough such indicators that the faculty member's research can be judged as meeting the high standards of excellence in research that the Physics Department maintains.

Teaching

The Department of Physics maintains two separate teaching missions: (a) 100 level courses taught mostly for general education and as preparation for majors in health sciences, engineering, physics and the other physical sciences. (b) courses above 100 level taught mostly for physics majors, engineering majors and physics graduate students.

Special Lecturers are generally assigned 100 level courses (except where the teaching needs of the department dictate otherwise). In contrast, tenured and tenure track faculty will generally be given teaching assignments approximately evenly divided between teaching missions (a) and (b).

It is expected that each faculty member will be able to teach a wide variety of courses; however in assigning courses the department chair will take into account the particular strengths of the faculty member as well as the teaching needs of the department.

The **normal teaching load** for tenured and tenure track faculty without federal funding will be **four courses divided evenly between the Fall and Winter semesters.**

The department chair shall receive one course release per semester.

Those faculty on reduced workload will have their teaching duties determined at the time the reduction in workload is made.

The normal teaching load for tenure track faculty in the first two years of employment at Oakland University will be three courses divided between the Fall and Winter semester. The decision as to which semester has two courses and which has one shall be the responsibility of the department chair. This decision will be based on the needs of the department's instructional program; but will also make every effort to accommodate the needs of the faculty. This teaching load is assigned with the understanding of the great efforts and achievements that are currently needed to obtain federal research funding, and in the hope that the faculty member will use those first two years of employment to establish a research program that is successful in obtaining federal funding.

The teaching load for tenured and tenure track **faculty with external funding** will be **reduced** from the normal teaching load of four courses. **The amount of the reduction will be based on the research productivity of the faculty member. The decision on the amount of the reduction will be made by the department chair with the advice and consent of the Dean.** The scheduling of these courses shall be the responsibility of the department chair. This scheduling will be based on the needs of the department's instructional program; but will also make every effort to accommodate the needs of the faculty member. This teaching load is assigned with the understanding of the great efforts and achievements that are currently needed to obtain external research funding. In addition, it is also understood that OU physics faculty are competing for grants with faculty at other institutions that have PhD programs in physics and a normal teaching load of two courses per year or fewer. In an adverse funding climate, very positive reviews of grant proposals by funding agencies may for these purposes be considered an adequate substitute for external funding and thus result in a reduced teaching load, for a limited time only.

Service

Tenured and tenure track faculty are expected to do an extensive amount of service. The service activities generally fall into two broad categories: (a) service to the institution and (b) service to the profession. Service to the institution includes, but is not limited to, such activities as service on departmental, college or university committees, advising students, acting as an officer of the AAUP or Sigma Xi. Professional service includes, but is not limited to, such activities as refereeing journal articles, refereeing grant proposals both individually and as part of a panel, being an external examiner for PhD theses from other institutions, being an officer in a professional organization, and being on the editorial board of a peer reviewed journal. Outreach activities, such as giving talks on physics to the general public, or writing physics books for a general audience, are considered both professional service and public service.

It is expected that each tenured and tenure track faculty member will do an extensive amount of service. However, the type of service done, and in particular the mix between service to the institution and service to the profession, is entirely the choice of the individual faculty member.