Senate Standing Committee on Academic Policy
Response to Charge #1
10/27/2016

Charge #1 – “The APC shall review written as well as customary workload policies and practices for full time faculty (T/TT, non TT, and interdisciplinary) at every college/school across the university. The APC shall provide a document that summarizes these policies and practices by November 2016.”

In the Spring of 2016, the APC, working in collaboration with the Provost Office, requested all units across the different Colleges of Northeastern University to share their full-time faculty workload policies. We have collected the following workload policy documents to date: Bouvé College of Health Sciences, the College of Social Sciences and Humanities, the College of Engineering, the College of Computer and Information Sciences and the departments of Biology, Math, Physics, Psychology, Chemistry, Marine and Environmental Science in the College of Science, and the Linguistics Program in the English Department in the College of Social Science and Humanities.

Our review of these documents yields the following findings:
   a. There is considerable variability in how units define workload practices of their tenure/tenure track faculty, non-tenure track, interdisciplinary, and jointly-appointed faculty.
   b. Some of the units base teaching loads on the extent to which their tenure track/tenured faculty are actively conducting research.
   c. Some documents describe ambiguous policies.
   d. Some policies are not fully described in a single, accessible document.
   e. It appears that some policies are not easily and publically available to all faculty members in the unit.
   f. Guidelines for non-tenure track faculty are not consistently included in the policies as described.
   g. Documents do not consistently describe mechanisms to be used by faculty members to resolve workload disputes.
   h. There may be inconsistencies between college and unit policies.
   i. Since the University is divided in different colleges that encompass different disciplines and fields, it is not surprising to find lack of uniformity in the policies described in the documents. Differences in professional standards between fields will in turn require different policies, and perhaps even different policies within different units of the same college.

We also reviewed the 2004 Workload Policy approved by the Faculty Senate, which was never incorporated into the Faculty Handbook. The policy is twelve years old and was never fully implemented, and the Academic Policy Committee recommends learning from and building upon the best current practices in units across the University.

As a result, the Academic Policy Committee recommends that a new policy be adopted that supersedes all prior policy and that guides academic units in the development of full-time faculty workload policies for their units. Our recommendation includes using a Checklist, based on our review of all current workload policies, that will allow a unit’s policy
documents to be evaluated and assessed on a number of aspects, including completeness and consistency. We have provided an example of a Checklist, which can serve as a model for the final Checklist adopted by the Provost's Office.