

Faculty Basic Expectations

This outline is provided because of recent faculty requests for standards, which have been unclear for such things as office hours and attendance at work, teaching assistant supervision, and communication with the department. In some cases, the lack of clarity has caused problems preventing or delaying the department from conducting routine business and accomplishing its teaching mission.

This document is provided in the spirit of the recent University and College of Liberal Arts and Sciences efforts to provide explicit guidelines, policies, and procedures. The items listed here have been culled from various university documents, minutes from executive officers meetings, and discussions at Communication Department faculty meetings. No complete or exhaustive listing is intended, but these should provide some guidance, clear up some confusion, and help support the equitable treatment of the faculty.

Attendance

Term of appointment. Professors with full-time appointments (whether tenured, tenure-track, or visiting) must be available for work from August 16 through May 15 each year, except during official university holidays. Summer appointments run from one week before the beginning of classes through one week after classes end (usually from late May through the end of July).

Regular business hours. Professors are expected to be in attendance on campus during regular business hours, which most commonly run for eight daytime hours Monday through Friday, but may run afternoon through evening on days when a teaching assignment is scheduled at night.

Off-campus work. When on-campus commitments are not scheduled, professors may work elsewhere near campus, including other research facilities or similar places and home offices in the Chicago area, provided that they inform the department of how to reach them and stay in regular contact via their campus e-mail and voice mail. These rules apply during the entire term of appointment, including pre-, mid- and post-semester breaks.

Honor system. Faculty are on the honor system; there is generally no effort to monitor attendance closely or formally. However, monitoring may be required when attendance becomes an issue, that is, when professors are repeatedly away from campus and inaccessible or out of communication or when professors put off-campus work time ahead of tasks such as meetings, which require that several members coordinate their schedules.

Absence

Scholarly meetings and research. Professors may absent themselves from campus to attend and speak at or act in a leadership capacity for conferences and conventions directly related to assigned teaching and research responsibilities. They may occasionally absent themselves from the Chicago area for brief periods (such as a day or two) to conduct field work, do research in archives and libraries, and the like, although such absences are not considered usual.

Information. In all cases, any professor who must be away from campus for any reason must communicate the purpose and duration of the absence, along with full details of how she or he can be reached or will stay in touch during the absence.

Extenuating circumstances. Occasionally external factors (such as bad weather or transit breakdowns) may cause an absence, and in these rare cases the professor must communicate with the department and make alternative work arrangements as quickly as possible. Health-related appointments likewise require advance communication and arrangements.

Emergencies. In cases of illness and health-related emergencies, professors must contact the office as soon as possible so that students and others with business to conduct can be informed. All sick days for illness and medical appointments must be reported monthly.

Substitutes. Professors are responsible, except in emergencies, to arrange for substitutes for their classes and inform the department. In the first line of support are other colleagues in the department. Teaching assistants should not be used as substitutes unless their doing so is only occasional at most and does not materially affect teaching the substance of the course. Department staff members are not available to act as classroom substitutes, exam proctors, or the like.

Teaching Contact

Load. Professors must teach the courses assigned. For tenured or tenure-track professors engaged in research activities, the typical load in the department is two courses per semester. For other professors, a higher teaching load may be assigned, in accordance with college and university policy.

Assignments. Assignments are made based on five criteria: first, the professor's ability to serve the students (that is, sufficient demand for the material to be taught and demonstrated effectiveness at teaching students at the corresponding level); second, the topical expertise of the professor (the subject knowledge appropriate to the course and its level, whether introductory, advanced undergraduate, or graduate). The third and fourth criteria apply only in cases where two professors are otherwise equal in student service capacity and subject expertise: third, the level of faculty service to the department, college, and university; fourth, faculty seniority. Finally, consideration may be given to the preferences of individual professors (but only when the other criteria are met).

Teaching. The instructor of record for the course must meet with and teach each class for the full period in the assigned classroom as scheduled. These contact hours are the base measurement of teaching. Assistants are available to assist (not replace) the instructor of record. Professors must provide full information to the department if any class is cancelled, cut short, moved to another location, or taught by a substitute or teaching assistant.

Schedule. Professors must be available to teach five days a week, including evenings. Although the typical assignment may include two or three days weekly, more days may be assigned, depending on the needs of students, availability of classrooms, and the like. It is customary to request professors' preferences, but teaching schedules are not set at the prerogative of the instructor. Requests for changes in teaching schedules (days, times, and classrooms) are considered extraordinary, must be directed to the department head, and will be granted only in unusual circumstances.

Office hours. Professors must schedule at least two periods of open-door office hours each week for each course they teach. Each period must last at least half an hour, although a full hour is preferable. Office hours must be scheduled at different times of day and days of the week, so as not to conflict continually with the students' other courses. For example, a professor teaching two courses on, say, Tuesday and Thursday, might schedule an hour on Tuesday, a different hour on Wednesday (or another day when the classes do not meet, such as Monday) and two periods immediately before (or after) each class on Thursday. (Hours immediately before or after class must be held in the office, not in the classroom, and these hours should be limited because they may not adequately ensure student privacy.) Student-centered instructors generally hold four office hours a week, arranged to allow all enrolled a reasonable chance to attend scheduled office hours. In addition, professors must be available to schedule individual, private appointments anytime during regular business hours, for the convenience of students.

Departmental Teaching

Courses. Certain survey courses (such as the introduction to communication) require various professors in the department besides the instructor of record to supply readings, conduct lectures, and provide exam questions for a session or week each semester. These assignments are arranged by the course instructor under the direction of the department head. Faculty are expected to cooperate fully in scheduling and providing the requested teaching services in a timely manner.

Colloquia. Faculty are expected to attend scheduled colloquia and should plan to present their current research projects from time to time to the full department. As the graduate program becomes more developed, such lectures will be expected at least once each year.

Service Load

Faculty meetings. Tenured, tenure-track, and visiting professors are expected to attend regular faculty meetings as scheduled and participate fully in the governance of the department. Instructors and part-time adjunct professors are also welcome, but not required, to attend.

Committees. Although professors are encouraged to express an interest in or preference for particular committees, assignments are administrative decisions. Faculty must serve on committees as assigned. Committee chairs will request availability information from members in order to set regular meeting times. Professors must include in their available times *all* business hours except their regular classes, office hours, and other scheduled meetings (as well as periods of approved travel or sick leave for medical appointments, etc.) Although professors might like to reserve research days or work-at-home days, such times must be scheduled last, after teaching and service commitments are scheduled, so that the teaching mission of the department can be accomplished and department business conducted in a

timely manner. Professors should always be prepared to come to campus during regular business hours when not traveling away from Chicago on official business.

Communication. Professors must stay in contact with the department offices during the term of contract (and it is customary for professors on continuing contracts to do so during summers, leaves, and other times away from campus as well). Contact involves checking e-mail and voice mail several times a day during business hours, especially when working away from the office. Carefully reading and listening to messages and prompt replies to such communications are expected, including the providing of any requested information by the required deadline.

Assistance

Staff. The three staff members in the department have a large bundle of assigned tasks involving student support and administrative support, which keeps them working at least full time. Staff members are not available for class substituting, test monitoring, photocopying, or other teaching-related work. Professors must turn first to colleagues for help if needed. Staff members are not available for research-related tasks, such as copying, transcribing, and the like. Professors must submit any request for staff assistance to the department head.

Graduate assistants. Teaching assistants are hired by the department, not the professor. Assistantships are awarded competitively, and students enrolled in the department have preference over students from other departments. A teaching assistant is assigned to a course, not to the instructor as a personal assistant. Teaching assistants do not provide research assistance to professors. (Graduate research assistants are funded differently, through faculty grants and awards.) Teaching assistants may be assigned to more than one course, and instructors must be sensitive to the number of hours a teaching assistant is employed and the need to divide those hours between teaching assignments, as directed by the department head.

Deficiencies. Any teaching assistant deficiencies, along with measures planned to address the problems, must be reported and are subject to administrative approval. Under no circumstances may a professor make statements to a graduate student implying a change in assistantship status without prior administrative approval. Graduate assistants must be treated with collegial respect at all times and in all circumstances.

Compliance

When any of these expectations is not met, the department head will convey that information to the professor through a routine (and cordial) conversation or e-mail message. Usually all that the professor need supply in response is an explanation for what caused the absence or other problem, along with an indication of how the problem will be corrected.

If in the course of several weeks a professor fails to respond or to correct the initial error or repeats the error, the department head will again communicate that information to the professor and seek clarification and correction. If the problem persists, the department head will communicate with the professor in writing and seek a resolution through consensus.

Problems that are not corrected in the course of regular communication become an element in the annual evaluation of faculty members and may be documented for eventual sanctions, as prescribed by the University and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.