



March 2023 Contract Tip: Workload planning and workload forms

The Contract Administration Committee has received some inquiries about workload assignments and, especially, the actual workload forms faculty should be receiving and reviewing this spring.

If you're uncertain of workload policies in your department, you can find them here: [Course equivalency guidelines](#)

You may receive pressure to sign your workload form. Remember, there is no certain deadline for signing mandated by our contracts.

We've heard from faculty in CAS that problems with the 'TAMS' system have produced some confusing workload agreement forms. Faculty should check the math on forms and discuss any discrepancies with chairs (dean or dean designee when there is no chair).

Here are some tips regarding relevant contract language:

Article 16.1: This section gives responsibility for assigning workload to department chairs, or, in cases where there is no chair, the dean or dean designee. Department chairs are required to discuss with faculty "schedule as well as workload expectations." These discussions will normally occur in spring before the relevant academic year, and they "will also include a discussion of estimated enrollment numbers for the courses the faculty member may be assigned."

The chair or dean may modify work expectations and schedules "provided they first discuss such changes with the faculty member, and **provided the changes are not arbitrary or capricious.**" This article also mandates that faculty "receive a copy of the workload plan and any modified workload plan."

Workload forms should accurately reflect the "percentage of effort for each: teaching, academic advising, scholarship/research/creative activity; community/University/professional service including clinical practice that does not involve the instruction of students; and administrative assignment." The faculty member and Dean should receive a copy of the workload plan once it is finalized.

Article 16.2: This section acknowledges that variations in "the weighting of assignments" on workload forms reflect "the diverse nature of faculty work, the varying types of faculty

appointments and the needs of departments and academic units.” But this article also includes language intended to promote consistency from year-to-year. Article 16 provides that **the weight given to a particular course in the determination of overall course load shall not be reduced from one year to the next**, unless the course itself changes substantially in terms of class enrollment, level of preparation, availability of teaching or research assistants, or delivery mode, or because it has previously increased to support a new preparation by a faculty member. Also note this language: “If a Dean plans to make weighting changes to the typical percentage of effort allocations in a department or unit *as part of an overall department or unit workload review, the department or unit faculty must be consulted*. Such changes must be finalized by the end of the fall semester prior to the academic year in which the changes will take effect.”

Also note that if work is added to your overall workload, that should receive an appropriate effort or CE allocation on your workload form, and there should be a commensurate reduction in other work.

Article 16.15: It's important to remember that our Collective Bargaining Agreement gives faculty a crucial role in the development of course equivalency policies. 16.15 reads, in part: “*the faculty and Chair* in each department or equivalent unit *shall develop course equivalencies* for all credit-bearing instructional activities to which faculty may be assigned.”

If you have questions or concerns related to workload assignments, contact the CAC at contract@unitedacademics.org Please remember that we prefer non-UVM email communications, since the administration has access to all of our UVM email. You can also use our confidential online form to send an inquiry, which can be found here:

<https://www.unitedacademics.org/contract-questions>

Our Collective Bargaining Agreements can be found here:

<https://www.unitedacademics.org/current-contracts>.