

Supplementary Guidelines for Managing Assigned Duties in the Faculty of Arts and Science

Graduate education is an essential activity in a comprehensive university. It is an expectation that faculty will typically be involved in the training of graduate students, as a normal part of their duty. In order to deliver quality graduate education in an efficient manner in the Faculty, there is a need to develop mechanisms for the assignment of duties that acknowledge the institution's realization of its mandate as a comprehensive university. It is understood that such mechanisms will be collegial and ensure an equitable assignment of duties, in the spirit of the Faculty Handbook. The model proposed here is intended to accommodate graduate supervision within a principled framework that takes account of Canadian norms for comprehensive universities. The model reflects the current reality of ca. 250 graduate students hosted by A&S departments and is intended as an interim adjustment on the way to the desired target graduate level enrollment, as a proportion of total student enrollment.

Nothing in these guidelines may override the provisions on workload and fairness in the University of Lethbridge Faculty Handbook.

Principles:

1. All procedures should be directed at maintaining fair, equitable and transparent practices for the assignment of duties.
2. All procedures should be uniformly applicable but scalable (i.e. they should produce the same local outcome regardless of structure or disciplinary orientation).
3. The overall integrity of a program (including graduate, undergraduate and service instruction) takes priority over course reduction per se.
4. The assignment of duties under these guidelines is intended to recognize the teaching, research and administrative work associated with graduate supervision. Any consequent reduction in formal teaching assignments is neither a right nor a reward for activity, but rather is designed to ensure fair assignment of duty within the Faculty, in the spirit of the Faculty Handbook.

Four ancillary assumptions inform the model. The first is that part of the rationale is to ensure an efficient and rapid response to changing circumstances. Second, that this response is in the service of the identified strategic objectives of the A&S Faculty as a whole. Third, that serving the objectives of the current strategic plan is best achieved by consensual, multi-level, decision-making within and across units. Fourth, University research is at its heart a teaching activity.

Proposal

1. **Where the delivery of material to graduates meets the justifiable expectations of standard courses, this will contribute to the faculty member's assigned duties in exactly the same way as equivalent undergraduate courses do.**
Graduate-level courses that meet these requirements will be those with a calendar entry, an intake ideally averaging to five or more students and a formal mode of instruction of

three hours per week¹. Where such courses do not meet the minimum enrollment, appropriate adjustment in the assignment of duties will be subject to the consultation process outlined below.

- i. This means that the rest of the proposal speaks **only** to engagement by faculty with individual graduate students.
 - ii. Where the annual student intake is small but needing directed instruction, synergies should be established across cognate disciplines and duties assigned accordingly.
 - iii. The required graduate courses are preferentially dealt with by (a) a combined upper level UG/GS course, or (b) a scheduled graduate course. Where this is not possible, this assignment is to be managed under 3 (below). If students have missing background, this must, first and foremost, be dealt with through existing scheduled UG courses taken at the *undergraduate* level. Normally, such an arrangement arises with respect to less than fully qualified graduate students. All remaining instructional needs that are identified for a student are subsumable under general supervisory engagement, including Independent Studies, that allow a student to specialize in a needed area.
- 2. The 2+2 course assignment is confirmed as the most typical baseline for teaching in A&S and is situated inside the 40:40:20 (teaching, research, administration) distribution of duties.**
- i. Graduate supervision is constituted by all three components of duty assignment. That is, it contributes both to the education of a graduate student and to the faculty member's research profile, in the wider sense, while also requiring administrative intervention. Aggregate assignment of duties acknowledges this.
 - ii. Research does not take precedence over the other two activities, nor are they privileged in relation to research.
 - iii. Assignment of duties therefore incorporates the administrative component and is not restricted to a trade-off between teaching and research.
 - iv. Adjustments in assigned duties, following Principle 4 and points 2.i. and 2.ii, are not retrospective but are determined in relation to current or anticipated supervisory activity. Adjustment can, however, be deferred to ensure best practice.
 - v. The objectives of adjustment are (a) to ensure equitable distribution among the three categories for each faculty member and/or (b) to meet specific strategic objectives, such as large grant management and tri-council grant retention. These are both subject to Principle 1, as are individual faculty members. This means that adjustments in assigned duties can **only** be offered to faculty members - or accepted by them - after consideration of the consequences for the department and the larger institution. This also applies to any such offers made by parties external to the department. Course reduction/adjustment of duties is contingent on an acceptable solution and it is assumed that where faculty members are seeking adjustment, they will participate fully in this process.

¹Or whatever the total semester equivalent is. New or experimental offerings as 5850/7850 are also included.

- vi. a) That Graduate Supervision counts towards regular assignment at the rate of 1 credit hour (CrHr) per year per student as a norm, depending on the resources available to a Department and the ability to deliver its program. *Formal* co-supervision will be pro-rated appropriately.
- b) For the purpose of this counting, the *normal* faculty teaching assignment continues to translate to 12 CrHr per year.
- c) That the maximum count towards regular assignments from Graduate Supervision is capped at 3 CrHr per year, independent of the number of students supervised.
- d) Normally, accounting for Supervision will be done ahead of time through the annual or biannual department timetabling. Credit that does not amount to a full course relief may likewise be awarded ahead of time but will be accounted for in subsequent timetables.
3. **For these reasons, and in compliance with the four principles, the central component of the proposal is that:**

Assignment of duties is established through consultation between department chairs and the Dean's Office after consultation in committee within departments and academic units, subject to Faculty Handbook provisions.

The core procedural commitment is **meaningful consultation**, and the core procedural obligation is FAIRNESS. There will therefore need to be evidentiary support for claims and this will require, in part, relevant documentation.

- i. Consideration of adjustment in assigned duties can be initiated by chairs, individual faculty members or the Dean's Office.
- ii. Chairs and the Dean's Office are both required to monitor individuals' duties. The members of Departments and other academic units will be kept informed of assignments of duty of members within their units.
- iii. Consultation will routinely be annual, but may occur at any time in response to perceived need.

Considerations

1. Fairness. Following departmental discussion, the requirement of fairness should be augmented by the participation in consultation of a "neutral" chair or other senior faculty member with experience² of course scheduling and assignment of duty, from a cognate discipline. The minimum consultation group would then comprise the Chair (or designated alternate), an Associate Dean and the neutral member. The role of the Associate Dean in regard to fairness is to ensure that student needs are properly served and that there is broad parity across the Faculty in the consultation process. The endpoint of consultation is consensus and, should departmental chairs and the Associate Dean identify consensus during initial discussion, there should be no necessity to proceed to a meeting with a neutral faculty member. In the absence of consensus the matter is referred to the Dean, whose decision is final, in accordance with the Faculty Handbook, relative to matters pertaining to the assignment of duties.

²i.e. someone who has served a term as a chair or who has been in the position for more than one annual cycle.

2. Resourcing. Staffing plans from units must consider the implications of this proposal and now include all of: (i) service courses, (ii) courses for the major(s), (iii) graduate courses and supervision. In the anticipated absence of major new staff resources, units are invited to respond to the additional challenge of graduate education by a comprehensive review of their offerings at all levels with an eye to even greater efficiencies³. Units are encouraged to consider a broader range of instructional resources, including the hiring and deployment of Academic Assistants III as front line instructors, greater use of graduate students in delivery of course components (labs, tutorials, break-out groups, etc.), deployment of senior graduate students (e.g. PhD candidates) as primary instructors for courses, etc. Appropriate streamlining of curricula and service course offerings is strongly encouraged. Consultations under Proposal 3, will, in the first instance, include consideration of how existing faculty and staff can best be deployed to achieve adjustments without additional hiring. Nevertheless, the full incorporation, and strong growth, of the graduate program will be a strong incentive in the Faculty's ongoing efforts to secure the budget necessary to undertake its responsibilities for being a Comprehensive University and achieving other Strategic Goals.

3. Due Process. Also in view of Proposal 3, in future all needs for teaching re-assignment, however they arise, and whether they originate from the standard processes, the Faculty Dean, University administration or through external awards, *must* be communicated to the Chair, not only to faculty members under re- assignment, in order to assure the smooth and efficient functioning of these Guidelines.

APPROVED: Dean's Advisory Committee (October 24, 2011)

³We are reminded that a similar review of program offerings was undertaken to facilitate the adjustment of the A&S normative teaching assignments from 3+2 to 2+2 during the previous decade.