

# SOUTH DAKOTA SCHOOL OF MINES & TECHNOLOGY

## Policy Manual

**SUBJECT: Faculty Workload**

**NUMBER: Policy 2-22**

**REVISED: January 2026**

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### 1. Introduction

This document provides the general policy for faculty members (professorial, librarians, instructors, lecturers, research faculty, and professors of practice) and their supervisors to develop workload assignments at the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology (South Dakota Mines). Per SDBOR Policy 4.4.3, each South Dakota regental institution is required to establish a workload policy in consultation with their faculty. The workload policy shall acknowledge workload expectations relating to the overall number of expected workload units, credit hours, contact hours, preparation, clinical work, instructional methods, research, service, and other factors as deemed appropriate. Per SDBOR Policy 4.4.3:

*Faculty members will be expected to undertake an effort equivalent to that needed to deliver thirty (30) workload units per academic year (15 units per semester). Ordinarily, each workload unit corresponds to approximately three (3) hours of effort per week.*

Each academic department and program will maintain a Departmental Expectations document that includes equivalencies for use by faculty and their supervisors in determining baseline percentages of effort in annual evaluations for all faculty and in the Professional Development Plan (PDP) for tenure-track faculty. Departmental Expectations documents must be reviewed and revised by each department's faculty members and supervisors at least every three years. Upon completion, the documents must be submitted to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs (Provost) for approval. The Provost, in consultation with supervisors, will ensure department-specific equivalencies are reasonably equitable across departments, while considering differences in program structure and factors unique to the subject being taught and the scholarship being done. This document provides recommendations to aid departments/programs in developing equivalencies for faculty workload.

### 2. Faculty Roles

Faculty roles, as described in the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology Statement of Institutional Priorities for Faculty Performance (adopted 2022) and in SDBOR Policy

4.4.3, encompass three broad areas: teaching, scholarship, and service. The distribution for each area of professional activity will vary by faculty classification, discipline, and individual, and standards for them will be established within the Departmental Expectations documents.

SDBOR Policy 4.4.6 defines the titles and duties of institutional faculty and the distribution of effort in each area will vary appropriately.

Professorial-rank faculty will participate in all three areas, and the distribution of effort for each area will be at least 10%. For distributions that include greater than 45% research or greater than 20% service, there must be justification to make such an assignment financially viable.

For lecturer rank and professor of practice rank faculty, duties focus on instructional responsibilities and related administrative, scholarly, or service activities as assigned.

Librarian and research professor rank faculty duties will focus on scholarly and service responsibilities as assigned.

During the annual evaluation process for the prior year of service, the faculty member and his/her supervisor will determine and provide justification for the percentages of effort for the upcoming year based on the Departmental Expectation document for the faculty's home department. Faculty must record their effort percentages for a given academic year in their annual evaluation document. Workload distribution is subject to approval by the Provost through the annual evaluation process.

### **3. Teaching and Advising**

At South Dakota Mines, the percentage of effort in teaching is related to, but not solely a function of, the number of course credits taught and contact hours met. Usually, one course credit is equivalent to one workload unit. Each administrative unit (i.e., academic department or program) will develop guidelines for workload equivalencies that account for appropriate factors in teaching and advising. These guidelines will be reviewed at least once every three years as part of the three-year review of the Departmental Expectations document.

### **4. Scholarship**

Each administrative unit (i.e., academic department or program) will develop guidelines for workload expectations for scholarly or creative activity. Scholarship workload will be established at the department/program level and workload assignments are intimately tied to both productivity and quality. Scholarship workload must support annual evaluation performance expectations as well as promotion and tenure reviews. These guidelines will also be reviewed at least once every three years as part of the three-year review of the Departmental Expectations document.

## **5. Service**

Each administrative unit (i.e., academic department or program) will develop guidelines for workload equivalencies for service. Per SDBOR Policy 4.4.3, an average of three (3) hours of effort per week is equivalent to one workload unit. These guidelines will also be reviewed at least once every three years as part of the three-year review of the Departmental Expectations document.

## **6. Buy-Out**

It is appropriate for Department Heads to reduce teaching (and/or service) workloads and increase the scholarship workload of faculty who are expected to be more productive than the department average, while increasing the teaching workload of less scholarship-productive faculty to maintain coverage of courses. Such teaching workload reductions may also be provided for pre-tenured faculty to enable them to initiate and develop a program of scholarship. However, no tenure-track faculty member's teaching load may be reduced below 20% (corresponding to two 3-credit courses per academic year) without explicit prior approval of the Provost. For most faculty, such release will be provided only if the faculty member obtains external funding to release a portion of their academic year salary. Buyout will occur once the faculty member's teaching workload falls below their base course load as defined in their respective Departmental Expectations document. To be released from an obligation of three equivalent workload units for one semester, a faculty member would have to cover from F&/A or external grants, at a minimum, the larger of 10% of their academic year salary and benefits or the actual cost to hire a qualified replacement instructor, with the actual amount to be negotiated by the Department Head and approved by the Provost. The released university salary budget will be made available to the Provost's Office to facilitate the hiring or compensation of teaching faculty to replace the teaching services not covered as a result of the faculty member being released from their teaching commitment.

## **7. Increased Workload Assignments**

In some situations, a faculty member may be assigned more than 15 workload units during a semester. In these circumstances, the workload assignment for an overloaded faculty member will coincide with the overload guidelines outlined in SDBOR Policy 4.4.5 and will require the approval of the Provost.

**Originated: Academic Affairs, Dec. 2020**

**Revision History: April 2025 (Clerical); January 2026 (Clerical)**

**BOR Policy/Committee References: [BOR Policy 4.4.3](#), [BOR Policy 4.4.5](#), [BOR Policy 4.4.6](#)**