Teaching

Policy/Procedure

Normal Classroom Teaching Load

Normally a full-time faculty member teaches five courses per year, including at least two different preparations. Laboratory responsibilities, with the approval of the Dean of the College, may be defined as some fraction of a course load equivalent, depending on departmental circumstances. Reductions in the classroom teaching load for whatever reason -- e.g., because of administrative responsibilities such as being department chair -- require approval in advance by the Faculty Personnel Committee.

As a reflection of its traditional commitment to excellence in teaching, Dickinson College normally expects that each faculty member should routinely teach courses at every level of the curriculum from introductory to the most advanced. Incoming students should thus enjoy the benefit of learning from senior faculty members in some of their introductory courses, and junior members of the faculty should in turn be afforded the stimulus of teaching the more specialized advanced courses from the beginning of their careers. Observance of this principle enhances the special environment for learning provided by a smaller college such as Dickinson, dedicated to the teaching of the liberal arts in circumstances that promote at every level close educational contact between students and a wide range of faculty members.

Time-slots

Courses are offered at time-slots within a weekly calendar approved by the Faculty Meeting. Each department is responsible for determining the distribution of its courses within that schedule, with the chair having the final authority to decide when, after consultation with department colleagues, no consensus has been reached. The Registrar, however, in consultation with the department chair and the Dean of the College, may alter the department's schedule where this is required to provide an overall distribution of courses that minimizes enrollment conflicts.

Additional Teaching Responsibilities

Faculty are also expected as a normal part of their responsibilities to accept their fair share of the following:

- **Advising Majors.** All tenured or tenure-track faculty are expected to advise some of the majors in their department. Each department has its own policies for how this is determined, but the distribution of students should be equitable and not based solely on student preferences. First-year faculty are not permitted to accept any formal advising responsibilities, except in unusual circumstances approved by their department.

- **Honors, Independent Studies, Independent Research, and Internships.** Full-time faculty are expected to advise a fair share of students engaged in these activities. Approval for doing so often involves department consent. It is inadvisable for any instructor to be
involved with more than three different projects at a time.

- **Freshman Seminars and Advising.** Every department is required to contribute faculty to teach in this program; exceptions must be approved by the Academic Program and Standards Committee. Faculty within each department are expected to share this responsibility equitably. Typically the seminar instructor is also advisor to those students, advising continuing until the students have declared their major. It is possible, however, to teach a seminar without advising and to advise freshmen or sophomores without teaching a seminar. Both of these responsibilities may involve required training and information sessions.

- **Additional Teaching.** In special circumstances (e.g. the continuing absence of such responsibilities as those mentioned in 1-3 above, or the inclusion of courses with very small enrollments) a faculty member may be required by the Dean of the College, after consulting with FPC and the department chair, to accept additional classroom responsibilities.

**Special Duties**

The full-time faculty at Dickinson are responsible for implementing the curriculum they have approved by actions of the Faculty Meeting. Assignments must be such that the courses comprising programs and majors for which the department is responsible in whole or part are in fact taught regularly, and all related obligations met in good faith. The chair of a department has the authority to assign responsibilities, including specific courses, to colleagues in order to meet those objectives; this must involve consultation with those persons, with every effort made to secure everyone's consent. The following special programmatic responsibilities deserve specific mention:

- **Overseas Programs.** Some of Dickinson's overseas Centers are staffed by full-time Dickinson faculty from the sponsoring departments who serve in that role for one- or two-year periods. The summer immersion courses are also directed by regular Dickinson faculty. Tenured faculty are expected to share equitably in the rotation of the directorship responsibilities for the regular year programs; tenured and tenure-track faculty are expected to share equitably in the responsibility for the immersion programs.

- **Interdisciplinary Programs.** Majors, minors, and certificate programs of an interdisciplinary nature involve the regular participation of faculty from each of the sponsoring departments. These duties are considered to be of equal importance to those requirements of the disciplinary programs.

- **Co-curriculum.** Mermaid Players, Dance Theater Group, Choir, Orchestra, and Collegium Musicum are formal organizations for which Dickinson faculty have been assigned responsibility. These activities are considered an integral part of the curriculum and of the teaching assignment of the relevant faculty.

- **Departmental Programs.** Language houses and language tables, departmental colloquia, student discipline-based honoraries, and other similar activities may be defined by a department as integral to its program. When this is so, all members of the department are expected to accept their fair share of the responsibility for it.

- **Coaching.** Physical educators are assigned coaching responsibilities for the various intercollegiate athletic teams. These assignments are considered an integral part of each
person's academic responsibilities.

**Attendance**

Meeting Class. Those teaching a class are expected to meet their class for the specified number of hours each semester. Absences in order to attend professional meetings are acceptable if kept within reason; where possible, a visiting lecturer, a makeup meeting, or some other suitable alternative should be devised.

Faculty Meeting. Those with the right of voice and vote at the Faculty Meeting have the consequent responsibility to attend its regular and special meetings.

All-College Convocations. All faculty are expected to participate in the Opening Convocation ceremony each fall and in the Commencement ceremony each spring. This includes taking part in the academic procession, dressed in appropriate academic regalia. This expectation extends to special convocations as well: e.g., the inauguration of a new president.

Jury Duty. A faculty member should accept a call for jury duty if arrangements can be made to cover his or her campus responsibilities. Where that is not possible, the Dean of the College will write in the person's behalf, indicating the problem and requesting that the person be exempted from jury duty.

**Related Information**

**History/Revision Information**

Responsible Office/Division:

Effective Date:

Last Amended Date:

Next Review Date:

Also Found In: Academic Handbook