

SRSU Policy: Faculty Workload Policy

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The evaluation of faculty for promotions, salary increases, reappointments, tenure, and post-tenure review shall include but not be limited to the duties described below. These duties are considered part of the normal workload of a faculty member.

The greater duties of a member of the faculty include:

- Teaching in the classroom, laboratory, or seminar.
- Studying, investigating, discovering, and creating.
- Performing curricular tasks auxiliary to teaching and researching, e.g., serving on faculty committees, supporting the accreditation process, attending to administrative and disciplinary tasks, and promoting diligence and honest work in the student body.
- Advising and counseling students.
- Beneficially influencing students and citizens in various extracurricular ways.

A. Standard Full-Time Faculty Teaching Load of Assistant, Associate or Full Professors

The standard teaching workload at Sul Ross State University for tenured or tenure-track faculty members who are paid full-time from the budget item "Faculty Salaries" shall be four lecture courses or the equivalent of twelve semester-credit hours of instruction in organized undergraduate classes each long semester or an average of twelve semester-credit hours per long-term semester over the nine months of the academic year.

This 4/4 load constitutes the primary professional obligation for tenured or tenure-track faculty, representing approximately 80% of the total workload, with the remaining 20% dedicated to research/scholarship/artistry and service.

The normal teaching loads for faculty members at Sul Ross State University are determined in accordance with the following criteria:

1. One semester-credit hour in an organized class is equal to one semester- credit workload hour.
 - a) An organized class is an institutionally approved course, having specific objectives in terms of subject-matter coverage and student development, which meets as a group at regularly scheduled times in a classroom, laboratory, or field location. Organized classes include lectures, laboratories, seminars, online, hybrid, and interactive- video group television instruction.
 - b) The number of semester-workload credit hours for each organized class equals the semester-credit-hour value of the course.
 - c) The caps for the number of students in traditional lecture courses, undergraduate writing-intensive courses, and graduate courses will be set at the recommendation of each department chair and the approval of the dean. However, the longstanding practice at Sul Ross State University has been to set these caps at **25–35 students** for traditional undergraduate lecture courses, **15–25 students** for undergraduate writing-intensive courses, and **10–15 students** for graduate courses.
2. Individual Instruction. Except for supervised practical and internships, private lessons in music, student teaching, and thesis courses, individual-instruction enrollments are not included in the normal faculty workloads. Responsibility for individual-instruction enrollments is assumed by the faculty in addition to normal workloads.
 - a) An individual-instruction course is one in which guided learning is provided on a one-to-one basis by the instructor to the student, regularly or irregularly scheduled, in which the student, through individual lessons, specific projects, or research problems, gains new knowledge of special value. These courses include arranged reading and research, individual studies, private lessons, and self-paced instruction.
 - b) The semester-credit workload hour equivalent in supervised student teaching is three semester-credit hours

for supervising from four to six student teachers in a semester.

c) An enrollment of nine or more students in private lessons in music is equal to a faculty workload of three semester-credit hours.

d) Any graduate-faculty member having three or more graduate students enrolled in any combination of thesis proposal, thesis research, and thesis defense during a full term and serving as the chair of the thesis committee will be entitled to three hours workload credit. No students shall be counted if they have exceeded six full terms of enrollment in the thesis program.

e) Any graduate-faculty member who has completed four graduate theses as the chair of the thesis committee within a five-year period and has not had any of the four theses count toward a workload credit in (d) will be entitled to three hours workload credit.

B. Standard Full-time Faculty Teaching Load for Instructors and Professors of Practice

The standard teaching load for instructors and professors of practice shall be five lecture courses or the equivalent of fifteen semester credit hours of instruction in organized classes each long semester or an average of fifteen semester-credit hours per long-term semester over the nine months of the academic year. NOTE: faculty instructors and professors of practice teaching a 5/5 load will not have any service or research obligations or expectations.

C. Adjustments and Exceptions to the Normal Teaching Loads

1. The chairs must ensure that the workloads of faculty within their departments are equitable and reasonable. This must include the cumulative total of classroom and laboratory instruction, academic advising, committee membership, guidance of student organizations, research, and service to the public. Instructional loads should also account for such things as the number of preparations, the number of students taught, the nature of the subject, and the help available from teaching assistants. The chairs are accountable to the college deans and the deans to the executive vice president and provost for ensuring compliance with the provisions of this policy.

2. Changes in the normal workload are recommended by the department chair, approved by the college dean, and reported to the executive vice president and provost.
3. No faculty member who is hired to teach remotely will hold a tenure-track position unless approved by university administration. Such appointments shall be approved in rare cases. Faculty who are hired as remote full-time instructors or professors to teach exclusively in online programs will not be required to teach in person and conduct office hours in person but will instead be required to hold office hours in the modality in which they teach.
4. The executive vice president and provost is responsible for reviewing the departmental assignments, monitoring compliance, providing reports to the president, and submitting the Faculty Report to the Coordinating Board each semester in compliance with Coordinating Board Regulations.
5. Instructors of organized classes that are team taught will proportionally share the workload credits assigned for those classes in accordance with their distribution of responsibilities. In the case that a PhD student team-teaches a course with a faculty member, the faculty member will receive full workload credit for the course, with the expectation that the faculty member provides adequate mentoring to the student throughout the course. Department chairs should ensure that intensive mentorship is part of a faculty/PhD student team teaching relationship. Instructors in an organized class which is team-taught will proportionally share the semester-workload hours allowed for that class according to the distribution of responsibilities.
6. The semester-credit workload-hour equivalent in laboratory sections in agriculture, science, and foreign language and in activity classes in physical education is one-half hour per contact hour, but in no case shall the workload exceed the semester-credit hours given for the class or laboratory.
7. Instructors who teach ensemble classes in music will be credited with two semester-credit workload hours for each ensemble taught.
8. The normal teaching load for a department chair shall be nine semester-credit workload hours each long semester. Workloads for chairs in the summer terms will be based on course needs and funding.
9. Neither a college dean nor the executive vice president and provost will receive overload payment for the first three semester-credit hours a year. For semester credit hours that exceed three a year, they will receive the normal overload payment. Faculty members, department chairs, and college deans may be required to

exceed the normal workload policy from time to time, and nothing in this policy should be considered to prohibit the administration from making this requirement. However, no faculty member should exceed their normal teaching load by more than six credit hours a semester.

D. Short-Term and Eight-Week Courses

1. Courses offered in shortened formats shall be counted based on credit-hour equivalency rather than duration.
2. A three-credit eight-week course counts as one standard course. Two sequential eight-week courses within a long semester count as two standard courses when credit hours are equivalent.
3. Short-term courses may not be used to exceed a faculty member's approved teaching load without compensation or adjustment.

E. Summer Instruction

1. Summer teaching is outside the normal nine-month faculty workload and is compensated separately.
2. Assignment of summer courses is based on student need, program requirements, faculty expertise, and equitable distribution among faculty demonstrating ongoing commitment through teaching, research, and service.
3. Faculty in non-administrative roles should be given priority for summer teaching opportunities.

F. Scholarly and Artistic Endeavor

Each faculty member is expected to be active in scholarly activities or artistic endeavors.

1. Scholarly activities include but are not limited to basic and applied research, writing and publication, and presentations to professional and learned societies.
2. Artistic endeavors include but are not limited to involvement in musical and theatrical performances, art exhibits or shows, creative writing, composition of music, writing scripts, and participation in related projects.
3. These scholarly activities and artistic endeavors should result in specific measurable outcomes such as publications in peer-reviewed journals and/or artistic productions.

G. Professional Growth and Activities

Professional growth and participation in professional activities are required of all faculty members. Professional growth and professional activities include but are not limited to attending professional meetings, participating in professional-development seminars and workshops, and holding offices in professional organizations and professional committees.

H. Participation in Non-Teaching Activities

Participation in non-teaching activities is required of all members of the faculty. Participation in non-teaching activities includes such activities as university service, advising of students, participating in the SACSCOC accreditation process, and public service.

1. University service includes but is not limited to committee service, student recruitment, student retention, curriculum development, orientation, registration, commencement, and development of grant proposals.
2. Advising and counseling of students includes but is not limited to academic advising, preparation of degree plans, scheduling of classes, career counseling, and referral to appropriate university or community services. This category also includes advising and sponsoring student organizations.
3. University-required office hours. All instructors must hold a minimum of 1.5 office hours a week per course. Instructors hired to teach exclusively remotely will not need to have in-person office hours but will need to have 1.5 hours per course of set office hours online where the instructor is available, and students can "drop-in" or set an appointment. Faculty members who teach online and in-person should have office hours proportional to their teaching modality. Their required online office hours should be set where the instructor is available, and students can "drop-in" or set an appointment.
4. Public service includes but is not limited to service to schools, government agencies, private enterprises, and the community for which the faculty member receives no remuneration.
5. Developing curricula is part of the normal workload of faculty except in the following cases: 1) when contracted by the administration to develop core-curriculum online courses, or 2) when contracted by the administration to develop grant-funded programs.

I. Responsibility for Implementing and Reporting

1. Workload assignments are mainly the responsibility of academic-department chairs. The chairs must ensure that the workloads of faculty members within their departments are equitable and reasonable. This must include the cumulative total of classroom and laboratory instruction, academic advising, committee membership, guidance of student organizations, research, and service to the public. Instructional loads should also account for such things as the number of preparations, the number of students taught, the nature of the subject, and the help available from secretaries and teaching assistants. -The chairs and faculty members must agree on the workload and weights of various responsibilities and designate these on the Faculty Evaluation Form FE-4 at the beginning of each academic year. Chairs must ensure that the workload of faculty members within their departments does not exceed six semester-credit hours above the normal course load. The chairs are accountable to their respective college deans.
2. Reductions in the normal workload are recommended by the department chair, approved by the college dean, and reported to the executive vice president and provost.
3. The executive vice president and provost is responsible for reviewing the departmental assignments, monitoring compliance, providing reports to the president, and submitting the Faculty Report to the Coordinating Board each long semester in compliance with Coordinating Board Regulations.
4. The president will provide reports as may be required to the Board of Regents, Texas State University System, and other state agencies.

J. Policy on Independent Study and Arrangement Courses

1. An independent study is a for-credit course delivered to one student per arrangement with a faculty member and under the faculty members supervision. Independent studies must be approved by the chair of the department and the dean of the college.
2. A faculty member may teach more than one independent study or arranged course per semester to help students graduate. This policy does not apply to an internship, a practicum, individual instruction in music, student teaching, or thesis courses.
3. When the creation of such a course section as defined in paragraph one is desired, the proposing faculty member must prepare and submit to the chair of the department an outline of study which

details the work to be done by the student. This outline of study should include a description of resources the student will use, the activities in which they will engage during the course, and the measures by which they will be evaluated at the course's end. In the case of regularly organized courses being taught under an arranged designation, the proposing faculty member should also address in the outline of study the ways in which the normal classroom activities will be replaced in the arranged course.

The proposing faculty member and the student must sign the proposal form, with the signed copy forwarded to the department chair prior to the twelfth day of class (or fourth-class day in short summer terms). The Independent Study/Arrangement Courses form is in the Appendix.

4. The department chair shall ensure the proposed course meets departmental standards and advances the department's mission. Upon receipt, the department chair shall forward the signed copy to the dean of the college.
5. The dean of the college shall review the proposal to ensure uniform compliance with the Policy on Independent Study and Arrangement Courses.

List of Countable Activities

SERVICE	Department & Program Service: committees; program coordination; curriculum review; assessment work; advising; search committees; faculty mentoring. College & University Service: faculty senate; governance bodies; accreditation support; task forces; policy development, committees, councils Professional Service: peer review; editorial boards; conference organization; professional association leadership. Community & Public Service (professionally aligned): public talks; community partnerships; service learning; applied expertise. Higher-impact examples: chairing committees;

	leading accreditation; officer roles; sustained institutional initiatives.
RESEARCH / SCHOLARLY & CREATIVE ACTIVITY	Publications: peer-reviewed articles; books; book chapters; edited volumes; pedagogical or applied scholarship. Creative Works: juried performances or exhibitions; compositions; designs; curated or public works. Presentations & Dissemination: conference papers; posters; invited lectures; workshops. Grants & Sponsored Projects: proposals submitted; awards received; fellowships; contract or applied research. Works in Progress & Infrastructure: manuscripts under review; data collection; IRB activity; fieldwork or archival work. Student Research Mentorship: supervising theses or capstones; co-authored work; research teams.
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	Teaching & Pedagogy: course design institutes; inclusive teaching training; instructional technology; peer observation programs. Research Development: methodology training; grant writing workshops; writing retreats; research ethics training. Leadership & Administration: chair/director training; leadership institutes; governance workshops. Discipline-Specific Development: conferences; certifications; licenses; emerging field training. Institutional Development: assessment training and accreditation training.

J. Tenure-track Faculty Options for Workload Tracks

As part of Sul Ross State University's commitment to academic excellence and faculty development, faculty may be appointed under one of the following differentiated workload tracks. Except in rare cases, newly hired faculty will begin in Track 1. Upon promotion to Associate Professor, faculty will review their accomplishments in teaching, research, and service, as well as the department's needs, in consultation with the department chair. At that time, faculty may elect to remain in Track 1 or request a transfer to another track. Any change of track must be approved by the dean and the provost. In exceptional cases, newly hired faculty may be appointed directly to **Track 2, 3, or 4**. Such appointments must be explicitly specified in the job description and approved by both the dean and the provost.

These tracks are designed to support teaching, research productivity, and service contributions in alignment with the university's mission and strategic goals. All tracks maintain a full-time workload equivalent of 100%.

Track 1: Standard Teaching Track (4 / 4 Load)

Workload Breakdown:

- Teaching: 80%
- Research/Scholarly Activity: 10%
- Service: 10%

Description: This is the default track for most faculty appointments. Faculty teach four courses each fall and spring semester, maintain ongoing engagement in scholarly or creative activity, and contribute to department, college, and university service.

Track 2: Service-Enhanced Track (3/3 Load)

Workload Breakdown:

- Teaching: 60%
- Research/Scholarly Activity: 10%
- Service: 30%

Description: Faculty on this track teach three courses per semester. The reduced load supports increased service expectations, including serving

as Department Chair, serving in an executive leadership role in Faculty Senate, or a special service appointment.

Eligibility: Approval by the Department Chair, Dean, and Provost based on evidence of active service and service appointments.

Track 3: Research-Focus Track (3 / 3 Load)

Workload Breakdown:

- Teaching: 60%
- Research/Scholarly Activity: 30%
- Service: 10%

Description: Faculty on this track teach three courses per semester and are expected to produce high-impact scholarship, pursue major grant funding, disseminate research at national or international levels, and mentor research students. Faculty must demonstrate a research agenda aligned with departmental priorities and show progress toward measurable outcomes.

Eligibility: Approval by the Department Chair, Dean, and Provost based on evidence of active research and scholarly output. In addition, faculty on the Research-Focus track have earned a significant externally funded research agenda and/or are leading major scholarly projects. This is a competitive selection with a demonstrated record of research productivity. Annual review required for renewal, or recognition as an endowed faculty bringing in external funding.

Track 4: Research-Intensive Track (2 / 2 maximum Load)

Workload Breakdown:

- Teaching: 40%
- Research/Scholarly Activity: 50%
- Service: 10%

Description: Reserved for faculty directing center-based research, leading major grants, or producing extraordinary research output. Faculty teach two courses per semester and are expected to serve as principal investigators, publish in top-tier outlets, and mentor research students.

Eligibility: Appointments must be justified by major grant funding, an endowed position, or strategic research initiatives and approved by the Dean and Provost.

General Notes for All Tracks

Changes in track designation must be reviewed annually as part of the Faculty Workload Planning and Performance Review process.

At the associate or full professor rank, faculty may request a track change based on evolving teaching, research, or service responsibilities, subject to administrative approval.

Chairs and/or Deans may recommend changes in a faculty member's workload track if the faculty member's performance (i.e., Teaching, Research, and/or Service) does not meet the expectations and requirements for their current track. Chair or Dean recommendations to change workload tracks shall be presented in writing to the faculty member during their annual academic performance evaluation. These decisions shall be made in collaboration with the faculty member within four weeks of their academic performance evaluation with their department chair in anticipation of the next academic year and must be communicated in writing with clear rationale and expectations to the faculty member and submitted to the Office of the Provost.

Departments shall have specific criteria or metrics aligned with their discipline to define research productivity and expectations.

Differentiated Faculty Workload Tracks

(Teaching – Research – Service Model)

Sul Ross State University



100% Full-Time Workload Equivalency • Track Changes Require Chair, Dean, & Provost Approval • Default Entry: Track 1

Faculty Evaluation Rubrics by Workload Track (Rubric Charts)

These charts are designed as quick-reference evaluation tools aligned with the Faculty Workload Policy (FH 2.08). Each rubric reflects the workload distribution and expectations specific to the track.

Track 1: Standard Teaching Track (4/4)

Category	Weight	Meritorious	Merit (Meets Expectations)	No Merit / Needs Improvement
Teaching	70%	Teaching excellence; innovation or leadership	Competent teaching across all courses	Documented deficiencies
Research	10%	Multiple scholarly activities	At least one scholarly activity	None documented
Service	10%	Leadership-level or above expectations	Normal faculty service	Service unmet

Professional Development	10%	Multiple / high-impact PD	At least one PD activity	No PD documented
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Track 2: Service-Enhanced Track (3/3)

Category	Weight	Meritorious	Merit (Meets Expectations)	No Merit / Needs Improvement
Teaching	50%	Highly effective and engaging	Competent teaching	Teaching shortcomings
Research	10%	Beyond baseline scholarly activity	At least one scholarly activity	None documented
Service	30%	Exceptional leadership with impact	Fulfills major service role	Service role not met
Professional Development	10%	High-impact PD supporting leadership	At least one PD activity	No PD documented

Track 3: Research-Focused Track (3/3)

Category	Weight	Meritorious	Merit (Meets Expectations)	No Merit / Needs Improvement
Teaching	50%	Innovative / exemplary teaching	Competent teaching	Teaching deficiencies
Research	30%	Significant outputs or strong momentum	Sustained scholarly productivity	Insufficient progress
Service	10%	Service includes leadership	Normal service performed	Service unmet
Professional Development	10%	PD strengthens research effectiveness	At least one PD activity	No PD documented

Track 4: Research-Intensive Track (2/2 Maximum)

Category	Weight	Meritorious	Merit (Meets Expectations)	No Merit / Needs Improvement
Teaching	30%	Highly effective given reduced load	Competent teaching	Teaching unmet
Research	50%	Leadership-level research output	Substantial output justifying load	Does not justify reduced load
Service	10%	Leadership or above expectations	Service obligations met	Service unmet
Professional Development	10%	PD supporting research leadership	At least one PD activity	No PD documented