



Policy Number: IV.23
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Policy Implementation: College Deans
**SACSCOC Standard: 6.2.b
10.4**

FACULTY WORKLOAD

I. Policy Statement and Purpose

Faculty at Athens State University support the University's mission of providing student-centered, quality education and are committed to the success of its students. This involves quality teaching, advising, and communication. In addition, tenure-track faculty provide service to the University and engage in research, scholarship, and professional development activities.

The primary responsibility of the faculty is quality teaching in their respective content areas, regardless of delivery format. This entails thorough preparation for courses, effective course design and instruction, and fair and timely evaluation/feedback of student progress.

This policy is intended to ensure both equitable and reasonable assignment of faculty responsibilities and quality instruction for Athens State University students. This policy should be reviewed every other year or by the request of the Faculty Senate to ensure that it reflects current faculty workload practices at Athens State University.

This policy applies to teaching faculty only; for responsibilities for library faculty, please see their respective job descriptions.

II. Faculty Workload

University faculty perform a vital role in the shared governance of the University. The faculty's role includes, but is not limited to, recommendations concerning curriculum, course content, degree requirements, class schedules, evaluations, representation on other units or bodies, discipline and dismissal of faculty/staff/students, fair academic policy, and fair faculty/staff/student representation on search committees for university administrators.

The University employs competent faculty members who are qualified to accomplish the mission and goals of the institution. All faculty members hold the appropriate credentials to teach within their respective disciplines. The [Faculty Credentials Policy](#) addresses the credentials required for teaching undergraduate and graduate courses. Depending on department needs and faculty



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credentials, a faculty member may have a teaching load of only undergraduate courses, a teaching load of only graduate courses, or a combination of the two.

In the calculation of the full-time tenure-track/tenured/instructor faculty workload, the following conditions will be observed:

1. Graduate courses count first toward workload.
2. Undergraduate courses receive second priority toward workload.
3. Non-instructional assignments are the third priority toward workload, except for Department Chairs. This NIA will count first toward a Department Chair's workload.
4. Courses offered in part of term 1 (full-term) and 2 (first mini-term) count first toward load before courses offered in part of term 3 (second mini-term), regardless of #1 and #2 listed above. For the spring semester only, December session courses will count first toward load over all other courses.
5. One graduate semester hour will be equivalent to 1.33 undergraduate semester hours for calculating the number of workload hours.
6. Practicums, directed study courses, and independent study courses are not included in the faculty workload. These, along with student teaching internships, are compensated as described in the *Faculty [Compensation Guidelines](#)*.
7. Cross-listed courses will count as one course.
8. Team-taught classes will be credited to all faculty involved on a prorated basis.

Full-Time Tenure-Track Tenured Faculty

For the 9-month academic year (Fall & Spring), a full-time tenure-track or tenured faculty teaching load will be equivalent to:

12 undergraduate semester hours per semester (Fall & Spring); **OR**

9 graduate semester hours per semester (Fall & Spring); **OR**

a combination of undergraduate and graduate courses for a minimum of 12 semester hours per semester (Fall & Spring)



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Full-Time Non-Tenure Track Faculty (Instructor)

Non-tenure-track faculty (instructors) occupy an important place within the campus community. Their central focus is on effective teaching and service to their colleges and departments, which could include advising at the discretion of their department chair. Instructors are not required to provide scholarship or university-wide service.

For the 9-month academic year (Fall & Spring), a full-time non-tenure-track faculty (instructor) teaching load will be equivalent to:

15 undergraduate semester hours per semester (Fall & Spring); OR

12 graduate semester hours per semester (Fall & Spring); OR

a combination of undergraduate and graduate courses totaling 15 semester hours per semester (Fall & Spring)

Adjunct/Part-Time Faculty

Faculty members who have part-time appointments, specifying both the part-time workload and the period of time (normally one term), with the appointment terminating automatically at the end of the specified period, are considered adjunct/part-time faculty. Please refer to the [Employee Classifications](#) policy.

The adjunct/part-time workload will be no more than:

9 undergraduate semester hours per semester for the 9-month academic year (Fall & Spring);
OR

6 graduate semester hours per semester (Fall & Spring); **OR**

a **combination of undergraduate and graduate** courses not to exceed 9 semester hours per semester (Fall & Spring)



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III. Non-Instructional Assignment

Occasionally, faculty are assigned responsibilities that require time that is not provided within a balanced workweek. In such cases, a non-instructional assignment may be assigned to relieve course workload to provide time for faculty to address the responsibilities within the work week. As NIAs count towards the teaching load, they are provided in one-hour increments. Each NIA hour should correlate with, on average, three hours of documented work time each week. At other times, faculty might be assigned an NIA to bring them to a full workload if reassignment to another course is not possible. In these cases, the Dean will work with the faculty to determine what project or work they will be doing that semester to bring them to a full course load, and that [NIA- Release Request Form](#) will be processed through the Provost's Office.

NIA Forms are due 3 business days prior to the start of any semester. NIAs are conditional on support from the Department Chair, Dean, and Provost.

The NIA form includes a description of the work that the faculty member will be doing, the average number of hours per week required to complete it, and the deliverables that will be achieved by the end of the term. NIAs are pending on support from the Department Chair, Dean, and Provost.

Some possible examples of non-instructional assignments include, but are not limited to:

Accreditation Activities	
Assessment Coordinator	
Department Chair	
edTPA	
Grant-funded Reallocated Time	
Honors Program	
Play Production	
State Department of Education Liaison	



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IV. Overloads

Faculty overload assignments are not guaranteed. However, overloads for full-time faculty may be assigned as needed upon acceptance by the faculty member. The [Faculty Overload Request Form](#) must be completed and approved by the Department Chair, Dean, and Provost prior to being assigned an overload.

Full-time faculty are restricted to no more than 5 semester hours of overload in any semester, except under special circumstances approved by the Dean and the Provost. Full-time faculty teaching an overload will be compensated in accordance with university guidelines.

V. Minimum Course Enrollments and Course Cancellation Process

To ensure the efficient use of institutional resources and to maintain high-quality academic offerings, Athens State University has established minimum enrollment requirements for all courses. These standards are designed to maximize the effective allocation of faculty time, facilities, and instructional support while providing students with a valuable and interactive learning environment.

Minimum Enrollment Requirements:

- Undergraduate courses must have a minimum enrollment of 8 students
- Graduate courses must have a minimum enrollment of 6 students

This policy is implemented to optimize the university's resources, ensuring that faculty time and institutional support are directed toward courses that serve a sufficient number of students. By establishing these minimums, Athens State University aims to balance the demand for specific courses with the availability of resources and ensure a sustainable and effective academic environment.

It is understood that there will often be cases in which a course will not meet the required enrollment threshold, but there are programmatic or other needs that necessitate the offering of that course. In these cases, the Dean must request approval from the Provost at least 5 business days before the start of the term.



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Some possible exceptions to the minimum class enrollment requirement that might not be counted in faculty workload calculations include, but are not limited to:

1. Directed study courses
2. Independent study courses
3. Non-Student-teaching supervision
4. Practicums
5. Graduate Capstone courses (including Mentored Studies I, II, and III; Project Development)
6. Graduate Directed Research/Thesis

Directed Study Courses

Directed Study courses are designed to be a substitute for a traditional course that is not offered in the semester for which the student wishes to enroll and is limited to no more than 3 students. In the event of larger enrollment in a directed study that exceeds 3 students but does not meet the threshold for an undergraduate course minimum (8), the Dean will need to request a waiver from the Provost. The material covered in Directed Study is essentially the same as that covered in the traditional course. Directed Study is intended to be used infrequently and may be offered to a student as a replacement for a course required for graduation that is otherwise unavailable to the student. Directed Study should be offered by full-time faculty members, and may be offered by adjunct faculty members only with the permission of the Chair and the Dean ([Request for Directed Study Form](#)). *NOTE: Directed Studies are not included in the regular faculty workload and are paid according to current payment practices. Because of this, no course will be converted from a standard course to a directed study course without the instructor's express permission prior to the beginning of the semester.*

Independent Study Courses

Independent Study courses are intended to be an extension, or "spin-off," of a traditional course. It provides the student with an opportunity to pursue/research a subject in more depth and in a more independent manner than would be possible in a traditional course. An Independent Study course requires an intended course of study, developed through consultation between the student and the instructor, which serves as the official course description. Independent Study is designed to



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meet specific student needs and interests. *NOTE: Independent Study Courses are not included in regular faculty workload and are paid according to current payment practices.*

Class Cancellation Procedure

Class cancellations are the responsibility of the appropriate Department Chair in consultation with the Dean. The Provost's Office will send out course enrollment numbers to the Deans weekly during the registration period before each semester. Department Chairs and Deans should use the Enrollment Report to identify sections that are at risk of falling below the minimum enrollment size so that action can be taken in a timely fashion.

One week (5 business days) before the beginning of the term, each College will review enrollments and cancel courses that are below the minimum enrollment number or petition the Provost for an exception. Prior to cancellations, students will be notified.

Faculty Reassignment

If a full-time faculty member has had a class canceled due to low enrollment as part of their regular workload, the faculty member must work with the Department Chair and/or Dean to modify their workload for the semester by reassigning them to another course for which they are qualified --this may be a course that is scheduled to be taught by an adjunct. Every effort to keep full-time faculty at a full, regular course load must be made. At times, faculty might be assigned an NIA to bring them to a full workload. In these cases, the Dean will work with the faculty to determine what project or work they will be doing that semester to bring them to a full course load, and that NIA request will be processed through the Provost's Office.

Adjunct instructors should be notified at least 5 business days before the start of the semester by the appropriate department chair if a course they were assigned to teach has been canceled or reassigned.

VI. Summer Employment

Teaching assignments for the summer term will be based on departmental needs and faculty goals, with consideration given to available funds. Summer teaching is not required, never guaranteed, and is at the discretion of the Dean.



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VII. Responsibility for this Operating Policy

Policy Owner

As part of the initial approval of this policy by the President and subsequent to the original dissemination of the policy, the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs and Student Services is the policy owner for the ongoing evaluation, review, and approval of this policy. Subsequent reviews and revisions to this policy must be in accordance with approved operating policy procedures and processes.

This policy will be reviewed every other year or more frequently as needed by the Policy Owner or by request of the Faculty Senate to ensure that it reflects current faculty workload practices at Athens State University. Revisions will be reviewed/affirmed by the Faculty Senate and the Cabinet and approved by the University President. This policy will be updated/published in the University's Policy Library.

Responsibility for Policy Implementation

The President has assigned the responsibility of implementing this policy to the College Deans, under the direction of the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs and Student Services.