

APPENDIX H: Workload Document – Department of Economics

This document has been prepared in compliance with Articles 6 and 34 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement for Faculty and Librarians at Queen's University.

Preamble

This workload policy governs the assignment of teaching and administrative tasks in the Queen's Economics Department. It is designed to achieve several goals, not all of which are competing. In particular, the assignment of tasks across faculty should be perceived as fair by the faculty involved. The assignment should encourage the specialization of faculty into those tasks for which they are better suited, and it should also allow faculty, as much as possible, to specialize in those activities that they enjoy doing.

Under our current system, assignments and the credit given for them are negotiated individually between faculty members and the Department Head. This mechanism surely creates some misallocation in the short run. However, it allows a flexible response to what is a very complicated problem. Workload requirements change every year with the faculty complement and over time as the tasks themselves change, and there are many tasks that arise in the course of the year that must be handled on an ad hoc basis. Given this complexity, and given the generally friendly nature of the negotiations, the Department has no great interest in moving to a different system.

The rest of this document outlines a set of expectations and practices that members of the Department feel are fair and reasonable. They reflect a combination of opinion and experience. None of this material is meant to constrain future negotiations although it may provide useful information to participants.

General Standards

1. The nominal workload for the QED is five undergraduate half-courses or equivalents each year. Normally this is made up of four half courses and administrative or other duties equivalent to one half course.
2. The planning horizon varies considerably with the task involved. For example, someone who agrees to teach an extra course in one term would normally get relief the next term or the next year. Someone who agrees to be graduate coordinator would get teaching relief at the time, but might not be asked to perform another major administrative duty for many years after.
3. Each Department member is expected to be involved in research and in classroom teaching and is expected to help the department meet its overall workload needs. While some configurations are more common than others, there are no further explicit constraints on the way in which a member may meet his or her obligations.

4. All faculty members are expected to engage in research. Those who are particularly successful at research provide external benefits, since all members share in the reputation of the Department and we all enjoy teaching graduate students of the caliber we continue to attract. Nonetheless, achievement at research (and teaching) is not officially counted towards a workload obligation, since it is rewarded centrally with merit pay and is also recognized by the outside market.

Some Specifics

1. Relief in the form of course reductions is normally given for administration, supervision, and committee work, some of which is listed below.
 - a) graduate and undergraduate coordinator
 - b) course coordinator of multi-sectioned course
 - c) committee responsibilities in the department, faculty, or university
 - d) thesis supervision at Ph.D., MA, and BA(Honours) levels
2. In recent years the level of relief for the common administrative assignments has been three courses for Graduate and Undergraduate Coordination, one course for everything else.
3. A new administrative position in 1997/98 will be Chair of the Renewal, Promotion, and Tenure Committee. This position will bring One course of relief starting in the fall of 1998.
4. Graduate supervision is a major task that involves much time and energy if done well. The work involved in bringing a Ph.D. student to completion can easily exceed that of teaching a familiar half course at the undergraduate level. Supervising an MA or BA(Honours) essay does not take as long, and it might take several of these to add up to a half-course.
5. Faculty members hired at the junior level are normally offered two courses off in the first two years of their appointments, and one course in the third and fourth years. They are not expected to perform major administrative roles until after they receive tenure. Depending on market conditions, faculty hired at more senior levels may get temporary reductions in course load as well.
6. Faculty members may normally buy off one half course at the rate of 1/9th salary. Further reductions are possible at negotiated rates.
7. Course reductions are sometimes given for other tasks, depending on the difficulty and time involved. For example, new preparations are an inevitable part of teaching, and also provide opportunities to learn. However, if many come at once they can be so onerous as to merit relief. Editorial work for academic journals can be immensely time consuming if it involves full responsibility for files, but for some journals it may simply mean some extra refereeing. If teaching very large sections involves much more work in grading exams it may also merit some relief.

Department members believe that the allocation of these tasks is best handled with patience and goodwill in individual negotiations with the Head.