

Workload Assignment Policy

Queen's School of Computing

(Formerly Department of Computing and Information Science)

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This document outlines the expected normal workload patterns in the Queen's School of Computing. It is divided into two parts: the workload policy itself and an appendix with answers to questions we anticipate might be asked. Note: since almost all of our courses are currently half courses, the word "course" below normally means half course. The normal division of workload in the Queen's School of Computing is 40% teaching, 40% research, 20% administration and service. Each faculty member normally negotiates his or her percentages with the Director each year, and can propose a reduction in one area compensated by an increase in another. The Director may refuse such adjustments; a voluntary increase in workload in one area cannot be used to insist on reductions in others. It should be possible for someone with a light workload in a particular area to be considered excellent in that area, relative to the amount of time spent, although this would make a proportionately lighter contribution to their overall evaluation.

1 Teaching

A normal Queen's School of Computing course is considered to be 12% of one's workload; this number may be somewhat higher than in some other disciplines because of the need for continual update of courses in our rapidly-changing field.

Normal teaching workload is 2 undergraduate courses and a graduate course in one's research area (totaling 36%), plus a proportionate share of supervision of capstone projects (4%, currently about 4 students).

Anyone teaching a course for the first time can normally expect to be compensated for the increased work by being assigned the same course in the following year. The standard teaching load of 3 courses is normally divided over two terms.

Cross-numbered courses are normally considered to be advanced undergraduate courses, and thus part of the undergraduate teaching load. At the discretion of the curriculum and Graduate committees, a cross-numbered course explicitly constructed as a research course may be considered as part of the graduate teaching load. The normal criterion for classifying a cross-numbered course as a research course is the fraction of the course material that corresponds to recent research results.

2 Research and Supervision

The school has a collective responsibility to supervise its students. Other collective responsibilities include participation in a proportionate share of examining committees, participating in CISC 897, and recruitment of new graduate students.

Highly valued research activities include production of papers in respected journals and conferences, and graduation of M.Sc. and Ph.D. students; many other research activities are also valuable.

Administration of research grants (including operating grants) is considered to be a research activity.

3 Administration and Service

Normal administrative and service workload is 20%. Normal workload is: 5% small tasks, not explicitly kept track of, and 5% active participation in a departmental committee. Active participation means attendance at meetings and carrying out some of the specific duties of the committee, which are normally expected to be distributed among the committee members. Other identifiable administrative tasks, and their weights in addition to the above 10%, are as follows: 5%: admissions committee chair, academic advisor, active member of University committee, and the like; 10%: undergraduate chair, graduate coordinator, chair of University committee. A member may negotiate with the Director to consider significant service to the profession as administrative load. Those faculty members whose administrative load as figured above is less than 20% can expect the Director to assign them a proportionate share of such ad-hoc administrative tasks as may arise from time to time.

4 Teaching Release

It may sometimes be possible to negotiate a teaching and administrative reduction as a way of generating more time for research. This would normally require payment to the school of more than the cost of replacement. The exact amount would depend on the source of funds; a prestigious but small research fellowship might require very little payment, if any, whereas a large industrial contract might require a substantial payment

A variety of means of estimating appropriate amounts normally results in 1.5 times the cost of offering the course.

A Answers to potential questions

This appendix answers questions that came up in discussing reasons for various aspects of the policy.

1. As a consequence of the policy regarding new courses, it may be that sabbaticants may have to teach a higher proportion of new courses in the year after the sabbatical, because those who took over the courses they had been teaching would get to teach the courses for a second year.
2. The material on research responsibilities is so phrased because the collective agreement forbids the assignment of specific research responsibilities.
3. Including M.Sc. student supervision under research workload is meant to encourage faculty members to insist on reasonable research productivity from their students.
4. Reduced research workload would normally be matched by increased teaching workload (at about 12% per course), although of course increased administrative load is also possible.
5. The maximum teaching load would thus be 6 courses (72%). The collective agreement forbids assignment of teaching in all 3 terms unless the instructor agrees.
6. Faculty members finding that their teaching effort is more than 12% per course are encouraged to either find ways to reduce their time or consider the extra effort to be voluntary.
7. The distinguishing characteristic of the "Research and Supervision" section is that under the Collective Agreement this work cannot be assigned, whereas administration and teaching (including capstone supervision) can be assigned.
8. The fundamental purpose of this document is to clarify assignable workload. During the annual/biannual meeting between the faculty member and the Director, the discussion may well need to cover how one's work is evaluated, and in particular how the split between graduating M.Sc./Ph.D. students; and production of research results will be judged. Such discussion may well subdivide the workload percentages more finely than in this document.
9. One reason for wanting the teaching release cost to be higher than the cost of a replacement is that normally one wants the release to be of benefit both to the researcher and to the school.