

**REPORT OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE TASK FORCE
ON TEACHING CREDIT IN ARTS AND SCIENCES**

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The Preamble to the Charge (see appendix) to this committee makes it clear that the college, like most colleges at this time, is facing formidable budgetary challenges. As a consequence, the administration is unlikely to add additional tenure-track positions in the foreseeable future and is currently taking steps to reduce the number of adjunct and visiting faculty positions. It follows that the perceived loading variances among and within departments can, for the most part, be dealt with only by shifting rather than by adding faculty resources.

We must emphasize that the ultimate goal of this committee is to suggest guidelines that will result in a fair and equitable distribution of the teaching load among and within departments, to maintain a 6-course annual teaching load, and to enable the College to operate within its annual budget. Our approach, like that of the AAC Subcouncil, has been to address the issue not in terms of departmental traditions--the "four-course load" of one, or the "five-course load" of another--but to assume that all faculty have a 6-course or 24 hour teaching load, and to address specific interdepartmental teaching practices that diverge from the standard 4-hour lecture/discussion class with a normal enrollment. We urge faculty to consider all of the proposed guidelines for these teaching practices before coming to a conclusion. And we urge the AAC and the faculty to consider our proposed guidelines as a package and not as a series of unrelated suggestions. Implementation of some of our guidelines and not others would indeed create even more unfairness in the counting of teaching loads than is presently the case.

This report is the product of a period of budget contraction; should the college see a new period of budget expansion, alterations can then be made, especially concerning team-teaching. We recommend that the Dean report annually to the AAC about the impact of these changes in teaching credit.

The following teaching load issues were addressed by the task force: the definition of teaching load, teaching credit for the Freshmen Preceptorial, senior theses/projects, laboratories, very small classes, team-taught courses, and arts & theater activities. We propose a series of recommendations and guidelines to deal with these issues, which we believe are consistent with the charge to the previous Subcouncil on Teaching Credit.

In addition, Terry Weiner, Dean of Arts and Sciences, has, in consultation with the Task Force, proposed changes in the number of course-releases granted for advising and program administration. This proposal is included as Appendix III to this report.

Teaching Load - Definitions

1. Courses that meet MWF for a total of 195 minutes and courses that meet TTh for a total of 200 minutes are considered 4 hour courses. Faculty are normally expected to maintain a minimum teaching load of 24 contact hours each academic year. In some departments because of labs, team-taught courses, and courses of different length, the total for one year may be a little more or a little less than 24. In that event, the shortfall should be "paid back" in the following year, and the overload normally can be carried forward for only one year (e.g., a person who teaches 26 in 1995-96 may teach 22 in 1996-97, but should they teach 24 hours in '96-97, their "balance" of 2 credit-hours disappears).
2. Without written approval from the Dean, faculty cannot teach a heavy load in one year, in order to take a light load in the following year; e.g., one cannot teach 7 courses in 1994-95, in order to teach 5 in '95-96.
3. Courses that meet in the extended periods (such as certain courses in the Math, Physics, Arts, and Philosophy Departments) for 255 minutes or more can be considered 5 hour courses for the purposes of counting teaching credit so long as enrollment is 30 students or more. In departments offering several sections of five-hour courses, all sections may count as 5-hour courses if the average enrollment is at least 30 students/section in a given year. If the average enrollment is less than 30, only those sections with 30 or more students will count as 5-hour courses. When enrollment falls below this limit, the courses will count for the regular 4 hours of teaching credit.
4. Courses taught as overloads, approved by the Dean and paid by the College, are not counted as part of one's annual teaching load.
Annual Audit: Before the 8th week of each Spring Term, Department Chairs must submit to the Dean an account of the teaching load of each member of the department for the current year and a projection of the same faculty members' loads for the coming year. This account should indicate, where appropriate, the number of senior theses, the size and credit allowed for small courses, the size and credit given for courses meeting in extended periods (e.g., in Math, Physics, Philosophy, and Arts), the number of sections of Freshman Preceptorial (indicating the sort of credit taken by the teacher), and all other variations from the 6-course, 24-hour standard teaching load.

Freshman Preceptorial

Freshman Preceptorial's importance to the general education of our students should continue to be recognized by the college when considering teaching credit. Therefore we recommend that

- 1) Faculty who teach in the program may choose to receive, for each section of FP taught, one of the following three benefits: a) a \$1000 bonus (taxable), b) a \$1000 grant for research or travel (non-taxable), or c) 5 hours of teaching credit. It is to be understood by Preceptors that they are thus obligated to attend the luncheon seminars, conduct the conferences, assign the required papers, and fulfill all of the other regular teaching responsibilities of this course. Should they fail to fulfill the teaching obligations of the course, they will not receive the additional benefit.
- 2) The size of sections of Preceptorial be increased to 16 students.
- 3) For purposes of teaching credit, a section of Freshman Preceptorial is to be counted as an ordinary 4-hour course (except under provision 1.c. above).

Guidelines for Senior Theses/Projects

Teaching credit may continue to be taken by faculty members in the Social Sciences Division for advising students' required senior theses. However, the following new guidelines will be used for awarding credit.

- 1) Each department will be subject to a limit on the total number of courses given for thesis teaching credit in a given year. This limit will be the lesser of (1) two courses per FTE faculty member in residence, or (2) the number of students writing two-term theses in the given year (counted as specified in (4) below) divided by four. • These overall limits are in addition to the ones established for individual faculty members in 2-6 below.
- 2) No thesis credit can be given for fewer than 3 students writing 2-term theses in a given year. Normally, one course of teaching credit (4 hours) can be taken for 4 students, and two courses of credit (8 hours) can be taken for a minimum of 8 students writing 2-term theses, except that the total credit given to all faculty members in a department cannot exceed the upper limit specified in [1] above. For any one faculty member, no thesis credit will be given in the second year if the average number of thesis students supervised per year for credit during a two-year period is below 4 (deficiencies in one year must be made up in the following year).
- 3) The department must provide the FRB with a summary of student evaluations of teacher performance for all senior thesis/project work awarded teaching credit.
- 4) Student theses/projects with more than one advisor should be weighted one-half credit per advisor.
- 5) Departments must establish internal guidelines for supervising student theses/projects regarding such topics as frequencies of meetings, feedback on work and timetables for completing all work. These guidelines should be consistent with those established by the Writing Board for "WS" credit.
- 6) No teaching credit may be awarded for supervising independent studies.

Departments in Divisions outside of the Social Sciences may desire to make use of these provisions. Before doing so, a department would have to refashion its major to fit the general type found in departments within Social Sciences: large introductory and upper-level courses, few seminars, or none, and normally a maximum of 10 classroom courses required in the major. Having made such changes, and without diminishing its contribution to General Education, a department might find that it was adequately staffed to grant those faculty teaching credit who directed at least 4 two- or three-term senior theses in one year. If its current staff were not adequate, however, it could not successfully request additional faculty positions simply to credit thesis supervision.

Guidelines For Awarding Credit For Laboratory Teaching

I. Full Teaching Credit (3-4 hours)

- a) Faculty would have 3-4 hours of lab scheduled every week for a minimum of 9 weeks (27-36 contact hours)
- b) Faculty are expected to be in the lab working with students all through the scheduled* lab period.
- c) Labs would normally require lab reports or exercises (or papers) that constitute a significant amount of writing over the term (approx . 30 pages).
- d) Labs should require significant preparation time for equipment set ups, exercises, as well as for grading student work.

II. Partial Teaching Credit (2 hours or less)

- a) Faculty would have 3 hours of lab per week for a minimum of 7-8 weeks (21-24 contact hours).
- b) They have, alternatively, 2 hours of lab per week for 9-10 weeks (18-24 contact hours).
- c) Faculty must be present during all lab hours and students expected to work through the scheduled period.
- d) Labs would be expected to require preparation time by faculty for equipment set-ups, lab exercises and for grading student work.

III. Minimum Credit (1 hour)

- a) Faculty would have 2-3 hours of lab at least five weeks (10-18 contact hours).
- b) Faculty must be present during all lab sessions and students required to attend all scheduled labs for the course.
- c) There would be some preparation time required for lab set-ups, exercises and for grading student work.

IV. No Credit

Credit cannot be awarded for labs that:

- a) are not scheduled or meet for fewer than 10 contact hours
- b) do not require the instructor to be present throughout the entire lab.

V. Additional Guidelines

- a) Chairs seeking to assign a faculty member more than ten hours teaching credit for one course and associated labs in one term must get approval of the Dean.
- b) Weekly problem sessions, even when scheduled by the Registrar, and required of the students, will not count for teaching credit, because almost all college courses require faculty/student work beyond the classroom, such as paper conferences, language labs, review sessions, and all-purpose office hours.
- c) Coordinators for laboratories cannot be awarded teaching credit without specific authorization by the Dean.

*Scheduled labs refer to labs scheduled for the student by the Registrar. In General Education courses students attend only three 3-hour labs, but 3 different sets of students attend each lab. So the instructor is in lab all 3 hours for 9 weeks. This would be considered full credit for teaching labs (3 hours teaching credit).

Loading Issues for Very Small Classes

The issue of very small class size and loading must be dealt with in two parts, the first for small classes involving both lab and lecture (in Division 3), and the second for small classes involving lecture only (in all Divisions). All courses with anticipated light enrollment should normally be cycled by the Chair to maximize enrollment each time they are taught, while still allowing students sufficient opportunity to complete the major.

All courses with enrollment of less than 6 students must be approved by the Dean, but should credit be granted, it will be granted on the following basis:

1. Required courses which include both lab and lecture:

| Number of Students | Normal Credit | | |
|--------------------|---------------|--------|--------|
| | 8 hrs. | 7 hrs. | 6 hrs. |
| 6 students | 8 | 7 | 6 |
| 5 students | 7 | 6 | 5 |
| 4 students | 6 | 5 | 4 |
| 3 students | 5 | 4 | 3 |
| 2 students | 3 | 3 | 2 |
| 1 student | 0 | 0 | 0 |

2. Lecture courses

| Number of Students | Normal Credit, 4 hours |
|--------------------|------------------------|
| 6 students | 4 |
| 5 students | 3 |
| 4 students | 2 |
| 3 students | 2 |

These regulations cannot be reasonably applied to some very small departments, such as Classics permanently, or Geology while it is establishing itself as a new major. The Chairs of these departments can work out in consultation with the Dean an individual arrangement for departmental offerings as a whole; e.g., a departmental mix of large GenEd courses, or sections of Freshman Precept, with necessarily small courses in the major.

Team-Taught Courses

It is desirable to make interdisciplinary and team-teaching attractive. However, at present to do so would require a very costly (and thus impossible) innovation in teaching-credit allowances or entitlements.

Consequently, for the foreseeable future, faculty wishing to team-teach a course should consult with the Dean about permission to do so, and the terms under which they may do so. How much credit the participants may receive should depend on the educational benefits of the course, its contribution to the College's curriculum, its enrollment, the nature of the participation of each instructor, and the staffing consequences for the Department(s) involved.

Arts and Theater Activities

The Charge to the AAC Subcouncil included a request to identify "models that help achieve equity and efficiency" not only in the teaching practices addressed above, but also in Performing Arts and Theatre activities. At present, faculty in Performing Arts receive teaching credit, or credits, for directing the Jazz Ensemble, Theatre productions, Theatre scene design, Orchestra, and Choir. . . in total, eight (8) courses of teaching-credit for the Department.

Several factors make it difficult for this Task Force to determine whether this is too much, too little, or just the appropriate amount of teaching credit. We did not know the number of students involved, the frequency of meetings, the relationships between the activities and courses running parallel to those activities, and the degree to which, for the faculty involved, the activities are also considered part of their scholarship. As a result, the Task Force decided to leave this matter to be worked out between the Performing Arts Department and the Dean.

However, we recommend that in the future there should be more accountability for these activities than in the past, including the following:

- a) the development of a common student evaluation form for Performing Arts Activities, in consultation with the FRB (as in the case of the Senior Thesis, p. 4);
- b) assessment of faculty performance in these activities in merit reports to the FRB;
- c) an annual account by the Chair for each faculty advisor of the number of students engaged in the activity, the number of performances, and the amount of scheduled rehearsal or practice time, and the amount of teaching credit granted (as in the case of all other teaching practices, p. 2).
- d) consideration of partial credit for some activities (2 hours rather than 1 course; or 6 hours rather than 2 courses) if appropriate.

Appendix I

A formulation is presented which allows for the quantification of faculty loading. The unit of measure is the contact hour of lecture, which is one 50-minute lecture each week for the ten week term. The current norm is 24 contact hours of teaching load per academic year. A faculty teaching load can be lecture contact hours or a combination of lecture contact hours and other approved equivalent teaching activities defined in this report. A few examples follow to illustrate the quantification. A course which meets Monday, Wednesday, Friday mornings from 8 : 45 to 9 : 50 a.m. is a four contact-hour course. A course which meets on the expanded time schedule of N, W, F at 8:25 a.m. to 9:50 a.m. is a five contact-hour course. Courses which meet Tu, Th at 9:30 a.m. to 11:20 a.m. are four contact-hour courses. Consequently, typical full teaching loads could be 6 four contact-hour courses, or 4 five contact-hour courses and one 4 contact-hour course (each for a total of 24 contact-hours).

Laboratory and problem sessions normally span two to four clock hours in time, and can count as two to four contact-hours. The counting of laboratory contact-hours for the purposes of faculty loading is presented in another portion of this report. (For example, a three-hour laboratory may be equivalent to two contact-hours with respect to credit toward the teaching load, as determined by other criteria.)

Appendix II

Charge to the AAC
Subcouncil on Teaching Credit
(Approved by AAC May 8, 1992)

Preamble

Union maintains a very rich academic program that is capital intensive. Combined with the fact that we have lower endowment per student than most of our comparison colleges and that we do not compensate for that fact by having higher than average student fees, the College faces a very difficult task in maintaining and enhancing its educational programs. In addition, the President has committed the College to three objectives: maintain need blind admissions, avoid lay-offs, maintain academic program. Furthermore, we are operating in a period of challenge and uncertainty in admissions. In order to try to cope with declining revenues and maintain the above three objectives, the College has made decisions with consequences, e.g., holding B and C budgets constant, eliminating some administrative positions, reducing the number of visitors and adjuncts, postponing the last step in planned increase in science and engineering budgets. Unless we can find ways to be more efficient in the way in which we deploy faculty resources it is quite possible that: a)- we need to re-examine some, and decide whether we need to abandon some, e.g., provide a capstone writing experience for all students and b) we will not be able to make improvements in what we do or undertake new initiatives.

The task of the Subcouncil on Teaching Credit is to examine the College's practices in the assigning of teaching credit with the goal of developing recommendations that ensure that teaching burdens are distributed equitably among faculty and that assigning of teaching credit is consistent with the educational goals of the College.

Rationale for the Subcouncil:

- 1) The college seeks to ensure reasonable equity in loading across departments without any net addition in faculty resources.
- 2) The college needs to determine whether sufficient loading flexibility exists to ensure equitable contributions from each department to programs mandated by the faculty (i.e., Freshmen Preceptorial, General Education, Senior Writing Requirement).

More specifically the Subcouncil in consultation with departments is to perform the following tasks:

1. Identify practices and policies in assigning teaching credit that may result in inequity across divisions and departments and among individuals including treatment of the following:
 - a) Freshman Preceptorial
 - b) Senior Thesis
 - c) Small Classes
 - d) Labs
 - e) 5 day a week or classes that meet for more than 200 minutes per week
 - f) Independent Study
 - g) Arts and Theater Activities
2. Identify existing and potential models that help achieve equity and efficiency and allow departments and the College to meet its educational goals, e.g., departments offer a mix of small and large classes.
3. Identify educational programs that present special problems in staffing, e.g., senior writing experience.

The Subcouncil is to approach its task within the context of the following parameters.

1. Maintain a six course teaching load.
2. Maintain a balance between teaching and scholarship.
3. Maintain a mix of large classes, small classes and independent study enrollments.
4. Maintain a student/faculty ratio that is competitive in relation to comparable institutions.

Appendix IIIAdministrative Changes in Course Release
and Sabbatical Replacement

1. Sabbatical Replacements:

The administration will normally not replace sabbaticals in departments with a faculty of seven or larger. If more than one faculty member is on leave so that the number of missing courses is greater than six (excluding senior theses) requests for partial or full replacement will be considered depending on available funds.

II. Course Release:

The administration will grant the following course-releases for the activities listed below. Increases in course release or additional stipends may be granted depending on the changes in work load for any particular task.

| | Hrs Credit | |
|-------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| | <u>Current</u> | <u>Proposed</u> |
| Women's Studies Director | 4 | 2 |
| Union College Press | 8 | 0 |
| Writing Board Director | 4 | 2 |
| Business School Advisor | 4(?) | 0-2 |
| Honors Program(s) - Economics | 4 | 0 |
| Pre-Law Advisor | 4 | 2-4 |
| General Education Director | 8 | 4 |
| Asst. Chair - Biology | 3 | 0 |
| Union College Choir | 8 | 4 |
| GMI Program Directors | 16 | 8-10 |
| | 63 | 28 |

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS COUNCIL

1996 REVIEW OF THE “REPORT OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE TASK FORCE ON TEACHING CREDIT IN THE ARTS AND SCIENCES”

April 16, 1996

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In 1993-94 the administration constituted a task force to study issues of faculty course loading. In February 1994, the committee issued the “Report of the Administrative Task Force on Teaching Credit in the College of Arts and Sciences.” This document has provided the guidelines for course loading during the last two years. At the time the report was made, however, the faculty voted that the report be reviewed in 1995-96. In order to undertake this review, Josef Schmee, Chair of the AAC, asked the chairs of all departments in the Arts and Sciences to report on any problems that they had seen arise from the applications of the loading guidelines presented in the report.

The Task Force stated its job as follows, “We must emphasize that the Ultimate goal of this committee is to suggest guidelines that will result in a fair and equitable distribution of the teaching load among and within departments, to maintain a 6-course annual teaching load, and to enable the College to operate within its annual budget.” They also said, “This report is the product of a period of budget contraction; should the college see a new period of budget expansion, alterations can then be made, especially concerning team-teaching.” Finally, the committee urged that the faculty consider all the proposed guidelines as a package and not as a series of unrelated suggestions, for “Implementation of some of our guidelines and not others would indeed create even more unfairness in the counting of teaching loads than is presently the case.”

The points presented above must be kept in mind as the report is reconsidered. First, equity remains an important issue. Second, we are all in a period of financial stringency which does not allow the addition of new faculty positions. Third, the balance within the “package” of suggestions remains delicate; any serious change in one part will require a reevaluation of the whole.

Five department chairs responded to the request for comments. The specific problems invoked were the variable teaching credits allowed for very small courses, the inability of the sciences to receive teaching credit for advising independent student work because of difficulty of managing or physically accommodating four research students in a lab in any one term, overly restrictive regulations concerning enrollment requirements in five-hour courses, and the rigidity imposed by only allowing teaching credit to be carried over for one year.

The AAC, after some discussion, proposes addressing these concerns in the following way:

I. Credit for small classes: The issue of credit for small classes differs from all other cases in which variable credit is given because it is post-facto from the perspective of the faculty member. A faculty member does not know that he or she may receive reduced credit until after registration takes place and/or after the start of the term. Consequently, the faculty member is then compelled by circumstances to teach for reduced credit or to cancel a course which may be of importance in the curriculum of the students enrolled. Furthermore, in those departments in which credit is not given for advising senior theses, there is almost no way for the faculty member to “make up” the credit shortfall.

Proposal: We would like to propose that the decision to offer lectures or laboratories to under six students be based upon pedagogical arguments rather than size. In other words, if the course is necessary for the majority of the students enrolled, it should be taught and the faculty member should receive full credit for teaching the course. This decision will be made by the Dean of Arts and Sciences in consultation with the department chair. The fundamental principle involved is that the

department will fulfill the general obligation specified for both Classics and Geology That the overall student load for each faculty member will approximate the college average load and that neither offerings in General Education nor introductory service courses be dropped in order to offer small courses.

2. Teaching credit for advising student research. The current guidelines specify that normally, one course's worth of teaching credit (4 hours) can be taken for advising 4 students who each do two terms of senior thesis/research work as long as this loading arrangement does not violate the other specifications of the guidelines. Any department may utilize this teaching credit option if they match the pattern currently existing in Social Sciences of large introductory and upper-level courses, few seminars, or none, and normally a maximum of ten classroom courses required in the major.

The problems that have arisen with regard to this regulation are several. First, in some departments, faculty are unable because of time and space restrictions to advise more than one or two senior theses or projects a year. Second, some faculty either because of time and space restrictions or paucity of appropriate students cannot advise the appropriate number within two years, and the report specifies, "For any one faculty member, no thesis credit will be given in the second year if the average number of thesis students supervised per year for credit during a two-year period is below 4 (deficiencies in one year must be made up in the following year)." Suggestions to obviate these problems include the following: first, granting partial credit for senior thesis advising so that one two or three term thesis student provides one hour of credit (1/4 course credit); second, allowing credit to accumulate over more than two years.

Proposal: It is clear that faculty in many departments do excellent work advising student research, that this work consumes a great deal of faculty time, and that this time is not recognized by the allocation of course credit. If partial credit were allocated and if it were able to be accumulated over more than two years, a greater number of faculty would be able to take advantage of the Task Force ruling. To allow the accumulation of credit beyond a two year period could create unacceptable distortions and uncertainties in staffing and, more importantly, would obviate the function of the release which is a recognition that to advise four two term thesis in one or two years amounts to the demands of one course because of the time involved. If, however, a department could be certain that it could meet all the requirements listed in the report of the Task Force (large introductory and upper-level courses, few seminars or none, and normally a maximum of ten classroom courses required in the major) and could also be certain that the granting of course credit would not lead to a reduction in the existing number of courses offered (especially the General Education courses) or in a need for additional faculty, it would perhaps be acceptable for partial credit to be allowed to accumulate. After some review, it does not seem that this situation regularly exists in any departments outside of the Social Sciences.

3. Credit for "five-hour courses:" Currently in order that a course that meets in the extended periods for 255 minutes can be considered 5 hours courses for the purposes of counting teaching credit, it must enroll 30 students or more. If there are multiple sections of such a course; all sections may count for 5 hours credit if the average enrollment is at least 30; if it is not, only those sections with 30 or more can count as 5 hours courses. It is a concern of one department that the number 30 is too arbitrary and inflexible and the request is that the regulation read "about 30."

Proposal: If the average number of students in the "5 hour" courses is close to 30 (28-), the department chair should consult with the Dean of Arts and Sciences about the possibility of all the faculty receiving additional credit. The AAC is unable to determine any numerical point that will be less "arbitrary," than the current number. The underlying issue is ensuring that a 5-hour course does not require additional faculty.