

## **4. Teaching**

### **4.1. Teaching Load Policy & Expectations**

In our process of creating a vibrant, strong, and flexible department that integrates numerous styles and combinations of disciplinary teaching, research, outreach, and service and serves the demands of the department's mix of distinctive professional, graduate, and undergraduate degree programs, we are committed to developing an equitable faculty teaching load policy and assignment process. We acknowledge the need to respect and collectively understand varying proven models for A- and C-basis appointments, Extension appointments, accredited degree programs, part-time and split appointments, faculty and academic instructional staff, and a number of cluster or joint positions that are deeply engaged across numerous campus units. Many of our instructional commitments involve restrictions in faculty-student ratios, lengthy design studio presence and coordination/training of TAs, multi-disciplinary off-campus field schools and workshops coordinating with institutions throughout the state, and the generation of interrelated public research productivity in numerous formats.

#### **4.1.1 Teaching Load for tenure-track Faculty**

Context:

- L&S Policy on instructional workload states: "The normal instructional load in L&S departments is two courses per semester per faculty FTE on the instructional budget, although for various reasons there is some variation around this norm." As a department, we recognize the unique demands of our programs require flexibility in how we satisfy this expectation, as integrated with our broader research and service duties.

Teaching Load:

- We aim to achieve reasonable teaching expectation guidelines for tenure-track faculty to meet departmental needs and L&S FTE expectations. The examples below suggest ways of achieving parity/equivalence with L&S's full-time teaching load norm of two courses per semester (or equivalent) per 1.0 faculty FTE on the instructional budget.
- A course is generally considered to be a standard 3-credit class, so that a standard faculty appointment would be expected to teach approximately 12 credits per academic year. While this may vary from time to time, the intention is to create an equitable teaching balance among faculty. Several additional factors also apply:
  - Studio classes with lab sections may be counted as more than a standard 3 credit course; for example, teaching a 4 cr. studio course with 7 weekly contact hours may count as teaching 1.5 courses that semester.
  - Co-teaching a course may count as a full course if an instructor is fully engaged throughout the course.
  - Co-teaching a segment of a course (e.g., 5 weeks of a 15-week course) may count as a partial course or a full course depending on the overall level of involvement.
  - A demanding or high enrollment lecture course may count as more than 1 course.
  - A lower-credit seminar or co-teaching course may count as a full course when balancing other teaching, research, outreach, and service assignments.
  - Similar to a studio course, a workshop or field school course that involves extra student contact hours may count as more than 1 standard course.
  - Dissertation or MS thesis advising may count toward a full-time teaching load (e.g., a post-proposal PhD student counts as 1/6 of a 3-credit dissertator/research course norm). Faculty advising and teaching of independent studies ordinarily do not count toward a full-time teaching load.
- The Department Chair receives the equivalent of a reduction in teaching load of two courses (or 6 credit hours) per academic year.
- The BLA Program Committee Chair and the MS URPL Program Committee chair each receive the

equivalent of a reduction in teaching load of one course per year (or 3 credit hours) for each academic year.

- The Executive Committee has the authority to grant other course releases for special circumstances, while taking into account department needs.
- The department recognizes that teaching load expectations described in faculty appointment letters reflect a wide range of circumstances and appointment configurations; the department intends to honor appointment letters regarding teaching load expectations consistent with department needs.
- If an assigned course experiences low enrollments, the instructor must coordinate with colleagues/ chair to continue to teach the course for reasons such as student degree completion needs or course development; or receive a formal course release from the Executive Committee; or undertake a substitute instructional activity as assigned by degree program chairs, colleagues, and the Department Chair.
- Faculty with A-basis appointments are subject to annual teaching load expectations consistent with L&S norms (2+2) or approved variations (1+2 or 1+1+1, for example). They are expected to remain fully engaged throughout the calendar year in research, service, or instructional/program responsibilities during summer sessions.

#### **4.1.2 Teaching Load for Instructional Academic Staff (Faculty Associate, Lecturer, and related)**

The College of Letters and Science considers a standard 3-credit course to comprise a 33.4% academic semester appointment for instructional staff with the title of Lecturer. With that as the basis, a full-time (100%) teaching load would be the equivalent of three standard courses or 9 credits each semester. As with faculty courses outlined in 4.1.1, studio courses and large-enrollment courses taught by academic staff may count as more than one standard course and credit equivalence.

#### **4.1.3 Teaching Load for Adjunct Faculty**

Adjunct Faculty are instructors hired by the department to teach a specific course because of their experience in the profession. These teaching assignments are case-specific, must be approved by the College of Letters and Science, and the teaching load and expectations are documented in each appointment letter.

### **4.2 Teaching Assignments and Course Planning**

Teaching assignments are made collaboratively by faculty, instructors, the Department Chair, and the Curriculum Committee based on individual expertise, program needs, strategic department goals, and the department's teaching load policy.

A central element of teaching assignments and course planning is the multi-year teaching schedule developed and maintained by the Curriculum Committee. The multi-year teaching schedule will be available and accessible to all faculty and staff. While multi-year schedules are not rigid and are open to changes, individual faculty and instructors are expected to outline a three-year teaching plan with the Department Chair and to update both short-term and long-term teaching plans each semester (in consultation with the Curriculum Committee and the Department Chair). Following an initial adjustment period, three-year plans for all faculty and instructors are to be completed and updated by May 15 of each year. By October 15, teaching assignments are to be finalized for the following Academic year (the next Fall, Spring, and Summer sessions).

Additional factors:

- Central campus and the College of L&S monitor student credit hours taught by each department. L&S compares these measures across departments when considering allocations for TAs and other resources. As a way to strengthen our financial health, a strategic goal for the department is to find ways to increase Student Credit Hours for the department to achieve a ratio of “% credit hours per %

101 payroll within L&S” of 0.80 by AY22-23. The term “101 payroll” refers to all appointment types (and all activities) paid on fund 101; our baseline AY18-19 ratio was 0.40, based on 2,817 total student credit hours.

- New course proposals are encouraged and should be developed in coordination with program committees and the Curriculum Committee to prioritize program and department needs. UW-Madison governance for new course review and approval requires the following timeline: For new summer courses, proposals must clear the DPLA Curriculum Committee by November 18; for new fall semester courses, proposals must clear the DPLA Curriculum Committee by February 3; for new spring semester courses, proposals clear the DPLA Curriculum Committee by September 2. In each case, L&S recommends that the proposals actually clear the committee months ahead of those deadlines.
- L&S publishes expected enrollment minima for courses (currently 15 students <300 level; 12 students for 300-699 level; 8 students for 700 and above). We view these as target minima and recognize the need for a reasonable accommodation for our accredited professional degree programs and other special cases.
- Core courses must be offered in such a way that students can complete their degrees in a timely manner.

### **4.3 Archiving Student Work for BLA Accreditation**

In order to ensure that **student work produced in the accredited BLA program** is uploaded to the accreditation folder at the end of each semester, and to find a means to ingrain the uploading of this work into department practice, the following conditions are established, effective upon approval:

- TA’s with responsibilities in BLA studio courses will include the uploading of student work in the studio, which they serve to the Student Work folder in the Accreditation Drive. This will be in TA letters of offer associated with those courses. Time will need to be allocated for TAs by course instructors to complete this work.
- Instructors teaching Land Arc courses 600-level and below (especially studio projects) are responsible for ensuring that representative work is uploaded at the end of each semester whether or not the course has a TA assigned to it.
- Instructors who fail to have relevant BLA student work for accreditation purposes uploaded prior to the start of the next semester may not be eligible for merit exercises, department awards or department support for equipment, conferences etc. until all work is submitted. This does not affect research funds and awards.
- Student work for this purpose is to be uploaded as completed projects as PDFs. Additional progress drawings and project statements should also be uploaded as PDFs.
- Details on where student work files are to go and the type of work to upload are available from the BLA program coordinator.
- The BLA Program Chair is responsible for compliance, including collection of information from (and regarding) visiting scholars and jurors.

### **4.4 TA Selection and Course Designation Procedures**

#### **4.4.1 Context**

The department hires TA positions for multiple courses, which may vary in number from year to year depending on budget and funding availability. TA positions serve multiple needs in the department: they provide instructional assistance, they provide funding and tuition remission for new and continuing students, and they provide teaching experience and mentoring for graduate students. The procedures

outlined below will guide decisions related to which courses and instructors are assigned TA support and how candidates for those TA positions will be selected.

#### **4.4.2 Determining Which Courses Will Have TAs**

A standard TA assignment in DPLA is a one-semester, 1/3-time position (0.334 FTE per academic semester). DPLA's base budget includes funding for eight 1-semester TA positions (equivalent to 4 full-academic year TA positions), and additional positions may be added each year depending on the projected budget. With this variation in the number of TA positions available from semester to semester, DPLA funded TA positions are prioritized for courses based on the following criteria:

- Support the needs of the accredited BLA program. For example, priority for required BLA courses with enrollment that exceeds the student/instructor ratio required by LAAB accreditation standards (courses with design studios, weekly discussion sessions or labs take precedent, over lecture-only courses)
- Support the needs of PLA courses for undergraduate students. For example, Land Arc or Urb R Pl courses with large undergraduate enrollments or intensive student interaction (such as field, studio, or lab courses with increased activities and graded assignments)
- Support special needs for instructors/faculty members. For example, special accommodations or special funding arranged by individual instructors/faculty members (e.g., special funding from Biocore to support a TA for a specific instructor/faculty member).

Each semester, the PLA Curriculum Committee will determine a rank-order listing of which courses will be assigned TA positions given sufficient funds (e.g., a rank-order listing for how 10 positions would be distributed among courses for a given semester if funding is available). The rank-order list will be approved at a department meeting prior to TA assignments. The department chair and department administrator will work consult with the Chair Advisory Committee in determining how many positions will be funded each year as well as whether any special support arrangements are involved.

#### **4.4.3 Selecting Candidates for TA Positions**

A student must be qualified to serve in the position, and generally previous teaching experience is desirable. The faculty teaching courses with TA support must develop a set of TA duties, responsibilities, and workload requirements as well as specify desired skills. The student/applicants must be in good academic standing (i.e., existing students must be meeting program expectations for academic performance and incoming students would not be eligible for a TA position if entering on probationary status). When feasible, students would receive a commitment for a full year for TA support (1 position each semester), which can be renewable, assuming strong performance and good academic standing. The expectation for funding incoming students would end after two years; students continuing beyond two years still interested in a TA position would apply as outlined below.

In the interest of program continuity throughout the post-merger DPLA transition phase through at least AY21-22, the department has a preference to fill 4 full-academic year positions with graduate students in the MSLA program; preferably, 2 incoming MSLA students could be awarded full-year TA funding each year, and 2 continuing 2<sup>nd</sup> year MSLA students could be awarded full-year funding. In this way, an incoming MSLA student who is offered a TA position, remains in good academic standing, and performs well as a TA, could have funding for their first two years. If there are fewer than 4 MSLA students who are qualified or interested in accepting the TA positions, then the positions will become available to incoming or continuing students in the department's MSURPL and PHDURPL programs as well as to MSLA students continuing beyond their second year of study. No later than January 31 of each year, the MSLA Committee will inform the DGS and the MS URPL and PhD URPL Committee chairs whether or not any of those 4 positions will be available, and those committees will have the opportunity to propose qualified incoming students for TA position assignment. Offers not accepted by the national deadline [April 15] will be open for re-assignment to other qualified incoming or continuing students.

If department's graduate programs do not yield a sufficient number of qualified students for available TA positions, the department would look to qualified graduate students advised by DPLA faculty through other programs (e.g., the Nelson Institute). If a qualified student cannot be found for a TA position within the department or through faculty advisees, the department would advertise the position across campus.

Using the rank-order listing of courses approved by the department, the PLA Director of Graduate Studies (DGS)[the Department Chair] will coordinate among graduate program committees (via committee chairs) and course instructors to match admissions support offers (incoming students) and applications (for continuing students) with courses. Prior to any offer, the DGS will confirm acceptability of the student/applicant with each course instructor. The DGS and department administrator will track position offers and status and provide updates to program committees and instructors as offers are accepted or rejected. The department administrator will send formal appointment letters for each TA position. If the DGS is someone other than the department chair, the department chair will also approve the appointments.

In cases where special accommodations or special funding is arranged by individual instructors/faculty members, that instructor/faculty member can opt to make the TA selection, following university procedures, and then inform the DGS and department administrator of the selection in order to finalize the offer and appointment.

#### **4.4.4 Application Process**

As part of the admission process, students applying to PLA graduate programs will be prompted to indicate whether or not they are interested in a TA position (or other kinds of department funding).

Continuing students interested in applying for TA positions complete an application form that includes a statement of interest, and a list of the topics and/or courses they are interested in teaching, together with an explanation of their qualifications for their listed topics and/or courses. Students applying for TA roles in design studios should describe their design and studio experiences and ideally include a design portfolio.

Students are guaranteed of consideration for available positions if they meet the posted application deadline; however, additional applications will be considered until all positions are filled. Position postings and applications will be routed through and coordinated by the department administrator. The department administrator will respond to all inquiries regarding TA positions throughout the year.

#### **4.4.5 Timeline**

By January 31, each year:

- the department approves the rank-order list of courses to which TAs will be assigned in the next academic year, as recommended by the Curriculum Committee. For example, by January 31, 2020, the department approves the list of the 2020-21 academic year courses to receive TA positions, given funding availability.
- the department administrator (or DGS) will confer with all instructors overseeing fall TAs regarding performance and recommendation regarding placement/discontinuation for appointment the following year. Any changes in academic standing will also be identified by January 30.
- The MSLA Committee chair will communicate to the DGS if any of the 4 preferred MSLA positions will not be offered to incoming or continuing 2<sup>nd</sup> year students and are therefore available to other programs for recruitment.

By February 15 of each year:

- the department solicits applications from PLA graduate students for available TA positions, with a deadline of March 15<sup>th</sup>. Current TAs will need to re-apply for the following year if they are interested in the positions.

As applications are considered, the DGS will coordinate with program committee chairs and instructors on offers for incoming graduate students. Offers not accepted by the national deadline [**April 15?**] will be open for re-assignment to other qualified incoming or continuing students.

By April 30 of each year, the Department Administrator will notify all applicants of their status.

Should additional TA positions become available—for example, because of unexpectedly high enrollments, or unexpected staffing changes—the original applicant pool will be reviewed and additional applications will be solicited as needed with clear deadlines that meet the hiring deadline.