

On the Balance of Faculty Professional Responsibility

Arts & Sciences Senate
Faculty Rights and Responsibilities Policy Committee

December 2, 2022

Article XII, Title A, paragraph 3 of the Policies of the SUNY Board of Trustees lays out the 5 criteria to be used for “Evaluation of Academic Employees”. These are

- (a) Mastery of subject matter
- (b) Effectiveness in teaching
- (c) Scholarly ability
- (d) Effectiveness of University service
- (e) Continuing growth.

Items (b), (c), and (d) are the 3 criteria generally assumed to make up a faculty members’ professional obligation. The balance between these is normally set at the time of appointment, and should be detailed in the Letter of Offer to the appointee. Otherwise, past practice in a department or, in the case of a long-serving faculty member, their past history, should prevail. Generally teaching responsibilities are the most easily quantified of these criteria, and it is this which should be quantified either in the Letter of Offer or by past practice within the department.

The Senate in the past has considered the question of what constitutes appropriate levels of Research (scholarship), Teaching, and Service. See the document entitled “ACADEMIC AND RESEARCH RESPONSIBILITIES OF TENURED FACULTY IN ARTS AND SCIENCES SENATE CONSTITUENCIES AT STONY BROOK UNIVERSITY¹”.

As the interests and scholarship of a faculty member evolve, changes in the balance between these criteria are perfectly normal and expected. Any changes made in the balance must be mutually acceptable to the faculty member and the departmental chair, and should be put in writing. Any temporary changes in teaching responsibility, be it an increase necessitated by departmental needs or a decrease warranted by increased scholarship needs, should be put in writing, with clearly indicated dates during which the change will be effective. Any permanent changes in teaching responsibility should also be placed in writing. The impact of any unilateral imposition of increased teaching responsibility without the consent of the faculty member may be construed as a change in the “terms and

¹https://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/senatecas/records/key-senate-documents/_pdf/_academic-research-responsibilities-tenured-faculty-frrpc-guidelines-final.2011-1015.pdf

conditions” of employment, and may be grievable through the UUP.

The FRRPC recommends that

- a.) All departments codify their standard teaching responsibilities in the Department By-Laws, and
- b.) Letters of Offer be standardized to quantify any and all expected teaching responsibilities, and
- c.) Said policies be collected and archived in the Provost’s office.

Adopted by the FRRPC: 2 December 2022

Adopted as amended by the Executive Committee of the Arts & Sciences Senate: 2 December 2022

Adopted by the Arts & Sciences Senate: