FACULTY WORKLOAD POLICY

COLLEGE OF VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

12/13/16, rev. 1/6/16, 8/22/17, 4/23/18, 5/2/18, 8/9/18.

Preamble

Faculty are among the most important and consequential resources of any university and so it is essential that the university, and each of Mason’s academic units, ensure workload equity while also maximizing the efficient use of our teaching, research, and service resources.

Recognizing and allowing for differences among units, these guidelines are designed to ensure consistency of workload expectations both across our university and as aligned with related policies and practices in our peer institutions. This document applies to all College of Visual and Performing Arts instructional faculty, and is consistent with the university’s Faculty Handbook, University Policy 3008 - Faculty Teaching Loads and University Policy 4012 – Roles and Responsibilities of a Principal Investigator, Mason’s Supplemental Pay procedures and State and Federal guidelines.

Base Teaching Loads in CVPA

- 9-month tenured and tenure-track faculty currently teach a base load of 3:3, assuming an appropriate and consistent level of creative activity, research, and/or scholarship. Faculty who do not maintain an appropriate level of activity for a period of three years may be required to take on additional teaching assignments up to 4:4. As George Mason University continues to make a transition to the norms of a research university at the “R1” level, CVPA is committed to a phased reduction in teaching loads for research-active tenure-line faculty, recognizing the increased potential for creative and scholarly production that this will enable.

- Term faculty teach a base load of 4:4.

- Directors, Chairs, and Program Directors are normally 12-month appointments and teach 1:1:1.

- Time-limited deviations from base teaching loads for full-time faculty (tenure track and term) may be granted for significant creative, scholarly, or research projects, administrative or production assignments (e.g., area coordinators, production direction or design outside of curricular norms), supervision of three or more Doctoral candidates, an unusually high number or intensity of independent study or internship supervisions, or other projects, subject to approval of the relevant School or Program Director and the Dean, and confirmed in writing.
In accordance with university policy, faculty engaged in sponsored research, grant-funded activity, or paid professional work requiring absence from campus may “buy out” teaching loads at the following rates: A one-course buyout is charged at a rate of 15% of the faculty member’s base annual salary; a two-course course buyout is 30%, and a three course buyout is 50% of base annual salary. Variations to this pattern are rare, and must be approved by the Dean and the relevant School or Program Director.

Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity.

• A consistent level of external creative activity, research, and/or scholarship is expected of all tenured and tenure-track faculty, and is reviewed annually by the relevant School or Program Director and the Dean. See CVPA’s Promotion and Tenure Guidelines (2018 edition) for more information on documentation and evaluation of these activities.

• Term and adjunct faculty are expected to maintain currency with appropriate professional expertise, knowledge, standards, and practices in their discipline, and are encouraged to engage with their fields regularly, particularly if they seek promotion in rank based on research/creative activity (see Faculty Handbook 2.3.3.2).

Service

• Participation in faculty governance at the school/program and college levels is expected of all full-time faculty (Faculty Handbook 2.1.9.) This participation expresses itself, at a minimum, in the form of regular attendance and participation in faculty meetings at both levels as well as in committees when elected or assigned to such.

• Service to the school/program, college, or university beyond the required minimum is strongly encouraged and is considered as a positive factor in personnel actions such as reappointment, promotion, tenure, and salary. Expectations of service are generally higher for tenured faculty and increase with rank. Such service may take many forms, from informal student or collegial mentorship to participation in special events, fundraising or public engagement activities, ad hoc committees or task forces, and other manifestations. Senior faculty mentorship of junior colleagues in the tenure and promotion process, and subsequent career development, is particularly valuable. Documentation will vary according to the nature of the service undertaken, but is important in all cases.

• Service to the professional field or discipline is a valuable exercise of faculty expertise, and is considered as a positive factor in personnel actions. Such service may take many forms, including peer review, adjudication, panel service, positions held with professional societies, service on editorial boards and active advisory councils, and other manifestations. Documentation will vary according to the nature of the service undertaken, but is important in all cases.

Tenure-Track Faculty Work Plan, Annual Report, and Evaluation
An effective faculty evaluation process should:

1) ensure appropriate and timely communication among the faculty, program leadership, and the Dean;

2) articulate mutual expectations as clearly as possible;

3) document performance as completely as possible;

4) provide a basis for guiding the professional trajectory of faculty;

5) provide a fair measure of accountability for personnel actions.

Each tenured or tenure-track faculty member completes a Work Plan for the upcoming academic year, including teaching assignments, service activities, and ongoing or new research, scholarly, and/or creative projects, and an Annual Report summarizing the year’s performance. The Work Plan is developed during the spring semester for the following year in consultation with the Program Director, and takes into account discipline-specific standards for quality and quantity of creative and/or scholarly production as well as the individual faculty member’s career trajectory and artistic and/or scholarly agenda. It is reviewed by the Program Director and Dean, and, along with the faculty member’s Annual Report, is a primary element in the annual review of faculty.

After receiving the faculty member’s Annual Report (in the fall semester for the prior academic year) and discussing any salient issues, the Program Director will provide feedback to the faculty member before transmitting the Annual Report to the Dean. At a minimum, this feedback will reflect the Director’s evaluation that the faculty member met, did not meet, or exceeded the expectations set forth in the Work Plan, and in cases where improvement is sought, will make specific recommendations to that end. Cases of especially significant achievement in research/scholarship/creative activity, teaching, and service should also be highlighted. As noted above, faculty who do not maintain an appropriate level of activity for a period of three years may be required to take on additional teaching assignments.

Templates for Faculty Work Plans and Annual Reports will be available on the CVPA website. [insert URL when live]

Timeline for Evaluation

Faculty Work Plans (submitted by Program Directors) for the following year are due to the Dean’s office prior to the last day of classes in the spring term (e.g., May 6, 2019 for AY 19-20). Annual Reports for the year just completed are due to the Program Directors on or before the first Friday in October (e.g., October 4, 2019 for AY 18-19), and to the Dean’s office (from the Program Directors, and including their comments) on or before November 1.
NB: This schedule takes effect in Spring semester, 2019 for AY 19-20. Work Plans and Annual Reports for the current AY 18-19 should be completed in as timely a manner as possible, ideally before Fall break/mid-term time. Following this transitional year we will move to the adjusted rhythm outlined above.