

A Memo from the Faculty Personnel Committee on Moving to a Teaching Load of Eight Course Equivalents Per Year

Dear Colleagues,

In this period of transition, Roanoke College is making many changes, including an increase the teaching load from 6-6-7 to 8 course equivalents a year, beginning in AY2024-2025. FPC recognizes this change will likely touch every aspect of our work (Teaching, Professional Life, and Service). In teaching, the number of course preparations and students taught will increase for some faculty, which may bring with it changes to pedagogies and other ways we interact with students, both inside and outside of the classroom. The time one may have to devote to professional life may decrease. With fewer full-time faculty, service loads may also increase; while the faculty may consider changes to service expectations, this will take some time to realize.

To help address some of these concerns, FPC proposed and the faculty passed an initial series of handbook updates reflecting change in professional achievement pacing appropriate for tenure and promotion. In addition, the Workload Working Group proposed, the faculty endorsed, and Academic Affairs implemented a temporary model that allocated a teaching release for each pre-tenure faculty member and reassigned course equivalents associated with academic advising loads of 30 units. Nevertheless, how we adapt to these changes may not be easy, seamless, or instantaneous. FPC would like to remind faculty that self-evaluations and dossier narratives are prime opportunities for candidates to engage in appropriate self-reflection, describing how their work is evolving as we all navigate this time, highlighting areas of success and improvement.

At the April 16th faculty meeting, the faculty passed a revision of 2.11 drafted by FAC; one portion of this revision struck the expectation of serving as an advisor. Also, FPC is aware that some departments are consolidating student advising amongst faculty in AY2024-2025 as part of the temporary reassigned course equivalent system associated with academic advising. These create a discrepancy with Handbook sections 2.6.1.1.5a, 2.6.2.1.3.5, 2.6.4.2, and 2.6.5.3 which call for all those being considered for tenure and promotion to engage in “competent and conscientious advising of students.” FPC will grant an exception to this requirement for those not engaging in academic advising during AY2024-2025. This means that not having advisees during this year will in no way negatively impact a candidate under review. During AY2024-2025, FPC will work with Assistant Vice President Leslie Warden and the Workload Task Force to address this issue longer-term, with handbook changes informed by longer-term decisions expected Spring 2025.

Sincerely,

Richard Keithley, Chair Faculty Personnel Committee AY2023-2024