



Policy AA8.02: American Sentinel Faculty

Oversight	Information
Policy Type	Academics, Compliance
Policy Owners	Chief Academic Officer
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Policy

American Sentinel University constantly strives to improve the quality of teaching, increase faculty satisfaction and enhance student experiences. Faculty leadership and administration periodically review the teaching schedules for full-time faculty, including both policy and actual experience. Faculty leadership also benchmarks policy, practice, research, scholarship, and service with research about faculty requirements at other institutions.

To support our institutional mission and the mission of the academic programs, full-time faculty workload includes teaching, service, and scholarship.

Guidelines

As a general guideline, American Sentinel University supports the following statement: “Higher education works best when faculty members teach with enthusiasm, engage in scholarly activities and research, and are deeply committed to collegial, community, and professional service.” (AAUP, 1993).

American Sentinel University follows the Boyer Model (1990) published *Scholarship Reconsidered*, in which he made two major points: research and scholarship take many forms, and no form is inherently more valuable than the others. Boyer concluded that the academy must be engaged in each of the four major areas of research that he defines, but also that each institution would do well to specialize in one area. Both higher education and the “real world” acknowledge the value of Boyer’s insights and the inevitability of a restructuring of the role of scholarship in the academy. The University considers itself, above all, a teaching institution, and its academic model is predicated on that self-image. However, the model includes the centrality of adjunct faculty, and, consequently, entails scholarly activity across the entire scope of Boyer’s scheme. Specifically, the application of Boyer’s scheme to this model yields the following categories: Teaching, Application, Integration, and Discovery.

At American Sentinel University, the primary activity of faculty is teaching and represents 80% of their workload. The remaining 20% of faculty workload represents service to the university and scholarship. American Sentinel University attempts to accommodate faculty requests on scheduling of teaching assignments to allow for personal and professional obligations.



American Sentinel University also strives to maintain an optimum class size that does not exceed 35 students.

Procedure

Teaching

The assignment of faculty workloads is organized on the principle that each academic unit must meet its overall responsibilities in teaching, research and service within approved budgets and in a fully satisfactory fashion. Because specific academic program missions may differ, the responsibility for determining specific faculty workloads rests with the Dean or designate, subject to review and approval by the Chief Academic Officer.

Faculty Teaching in Graduate Programs - As American Sentinel University is an online university operating year-round, in practice, faculty teaching in our graduate programs are assigned two or three courses (or sections) every other month. Courses run in eight-week sessions. Often by their choice, faculty members teach two or three sections, or equivalents, of a specific course in a term. Quarterly, the number of courses (or sections) taught by the graduate faculty is audited to ensure that no faculty teaches more than 14 courses or sections in a calendar year. The remaining 20% of faculty time is devoted to service to the university and scholarship. Service to the University includes course review, course revision, new course development, DNP Project chair assignments, and participation in shared governance on program and university committees. Scholarship is achieved by faculty attending and presenting at conferences, professional practice, and research.

Faculty Teaching in Undergraduate Programs – Faculty teaching only in the undergraduate programs are assigned two or three courses (or sections, or equivalents) every other month and the courses run in eight-week sessions. Often by choice faculty teach two or three sections of a specific course in a term. Quarterly, the number of courses or sections taught by the undergraduate faculty is audited to ensure that no terminally degreed faculty with capstone duties teaches more than 16 courses and faculty without capstone duties teach no more than 17 courses or sections in a calendar year. The remaining 20% of faculty time is devoted to service to the university and scholarship. Service to the university includes course review, course revision, new course development, DNP Project chair assignments (for qualified faculty with doctoral degrees), and participation in shared governance on program and university committees. Scholarship is achieved by faculty attending and presenting at conferences, professional practice and research.

A course or section, when evaluating faculty workload, is defined as any scheduled section or course with an enrollment of more than 12 students. A course or section with an enrollment of fewer than 13 students is not counted as a course or section as defined in the workload policy. If faculty are assigned to teach a section or course that contains fewer than 13 students, they may be required to teach an additional course or section with an enrollment of fewer than 12 students to meet their workload for the year.



Course Release Time - Although the number of courses/sections taught annually is the predominant measure for the 80% teaching full-time faculty workload, faculty may also be assigned activities that involve significant curriculum development, expedited course development, or major assessment activities (example: program review) that substitute for part of the 80% teaching load. These assignments or activities are considered part of the 80% teaching load and are not considered part of the 20% scholarship and service required for full-time faculty. Deans or Chairs may provide course release time from teaching for specific work on curriculum development, evaluation or revision, or assessment activities. Course release time and actual teaching load would be used to determine full-time equivalent (FTE).

Scholarship

American Sentinel University uses the Boyer scheme to acknowledge the scholarship activities of our faculty members.

Teaching- This area permeates the life of the University more than any other, in that teaching and learning for under-served adult populations is central to its mission. The scholarly activity in this area often overlaps with integration and/or application. Salient among the relevant activities here is the research necessary for developing, updating, and revising courses and curricula. This includes the review of textbooks, and, as mentioned above, the development of custom texts as appropriate. The assessment of student learning demonstrates application of knowledge. Especially in professional and technical areas, currency of information is a sine qua non for the success of students in applying their course work to the workplace. Keeping abreast of trends such as globalization requires familiarity with current research, as well as substantial real-world experience, since in such cases it is applicability that validates research. The use of faculty and student input, as well as data gathered from Institutional Research relates to this area, as well.

Application - This area has been expanded to include the term "Engagement," signifying a range of activity involving professional service both within the University and to the communities that it serves. This area of scholarship is essential to the mission of American Sentinel University. Applicability of curriculum is a hallmark of the University externally. However, application of theory is also a vital part of the University's internal operation. In the former case, the university includes the application of course projects in the workplace or community. The use of Faculty and Student End-of-Course Surveys in directing curriculum development and revision is a prime example. In addition, the use of focus groups in designing courses and programs represents the application of research to enrich the University's offerings. By soliciting feedback from students and employers regarding the efficacy of the curriculum, the University completes a communications loop and makes needed changes to the curriculum.

Integration - Externally, faculty members are actively involved in integrating, synthesizing, and interpreting disciplinary expertise for both academic and non-academic constituencies. This type of activity is manifested in a variety of modes and venues, from co-authored articles in professional journals to professional presentations and expert testimony.



Discovery - Research of this type, while not uncommon among American Sentinel faculty, is not at the heart of the teaching/learning model, nor is it central to the mission of the University. Such scholarship is encouraged, however, by the University.

Related Documents/References

- Faculty Handbook

Definitions

- **Faculty member** – At American Sentinel University, academic personal that have a title of adjunct, assistant professor, associate professor, or professor.

Revision History

- 3/19/2014 – Added additional information to procedure regarding additional course assignments and course release time.
- 10/31/2014 – Based on course enhancements, increased maximum class enrollment from 25 to 35.
- 1/16/2019 – Consolidated with AA8.06 Faculty Scholarship and added verbiage.
- May 7, 2020: Updated policy format for accessibility guidelines - AHB