

## MEMORANDUM

TO: ESF Faculty

FROM: Cornelius B. Murphy, Jr., President

RE: Policy on Faculty Teaching, Service and Research Responsibilities – Approved by President Whaley (1991), Reaffirmed by President Murphy (2000), Updated by President Murphy (2010)

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The policy described below reflects faculty teaching responsibilities at ESF. It expresses the unique capabilities of each faculty member and the needs of the institution in teaching, public service and research.

### **COLLEGE OF ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE AND FORESTRY STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK**

#### **POLICY ON FACULTY TEACHING, SERVICE, AND RESEARCH RESPONSIBILITIES**

Faculty in American universities and colleges have traditionally divided their professional responsibilities into three parts: teaching, service, and research. While the first two are common to all types of higher educational institutions, it is the last that distinguishes a doctoral granting Institution. The development of new knowledge is an explicit part of its mission; indeed, some of its most active researchers are among its best teachers. Service, too, takes on a particular cast at an Institution which has demonstration in environmental science and forestry, incorporated under service within its specialized mission. Further, without participation in Faculty and College governance and other activities, a faculty member is not fully a citizen. At a doctoral campus with strong emphasis also on professional programs of which some carry licensure and specialized accreditation needs, there is an added expectation that faculty members are also active leaders in their disciplines and in the wider community. Faculty members are accountable for the three areas of responsibility and their performance in each is evaluated for continuing appointment, promotions, and discretionary increases in salary.

Research and service roles of the faculty are sometimes misunderstood by those not familiar with the purposes of specialized programs at a research campus such as Environmental Science and Forestry. Thus there are needs to delineate the nature of faculty responsibilities and the variety of ways in which faculty meet these responsibilities.

ESF, over the years, has utilized the State University-wide system for measuring the number of courses taught by faculty; but while informal norms exist, the means to assess the research and service parts of a faculty member's responsibility have not been clearly identified. It is a combination of the three that constitutes the total

responsibility of the faculty, but only one has been systematically scaled. In order to help demonstrate that apparent differences are justified and to assure fairness across the campus, the following articulates expectations with respect to the balance among teaching, research, and service.

These expectations are based on the assumption that not all faculty in the College, nor indeed all faculty within individual Departments, will be responsible for the same levels of teaching, research, and service. While a basic level of each is required of all faculty, responsibilities beyond this level may vary and indeed are expected to do so.

The following framework describes how teaching, research, and service are generally understood to be balanced in the College. Obviously, the framework must be made applicable to individual Departments and modified as appropriate to take into account a variety of elements such as design courses, on and off-campus laboratory sections, comprehensive synthesis and project courses and the like. While diverse learning technologies must be accommodated, the framework does provide a general basis for equitable assessment.

For purposes of this framework, and with the understanding that equivalencies need to be specified, courses are assumed to consist of lectures or seminars for three hours a week and are semester-long in duration. Further, it is assumed that faculty may balance out responsibilities for teaching, research, and service over several semesters. Thus, for two years a faculty member might give extensive service to a Department, and in the third and fourth years, efforts in this area may be proportionately modest. It is also assumed that faculty may be called upon to teach at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Finally, it is assumed that Departments will take into account the level of student demand in making decisions about the degree of responsibilities for teaching, research, and service for each faculty member.

### The Framework

While all faculty are expected to attend faculty meetings, maintain office hours, advise a reasonable number of students, and provide independent study courses, there may be distinct variations in the amount of teaching, research, and service rendered by individual faculty. Essentially there are four general patterns describing the distribution of professional responsibilities expected of faculty:

- 1) Faculty meet the responsibilities described above; teach three courses per semester; engage in scholarly activities appropriate to their discipline; and engage in College/University service and/or approved relevant extramural activities.

- 2) Faculty meet the responsibilities outlined in 1 above, except they teach five courses a year. In this case, they are also expected to be engaged in substantial research that results in significant scholarly products in their field or significantly involved in doctoral education.<sup>1</sup>
- 3) Faculty meet the responsibilities outlined in 1 above, but instead teach two courses per semester. In this case, they are also expected to be significantly involved in doctoral education<sup>1</sup> and engaged in substantial research that results in significant scholarly products recognized in their field of study.
- 4) Faculty whose initial appointment is in the Instructor title whose primary professional obligation is classroom instruction will typically teach four courses each semester. In this case, their research and service combined does not typically exceed 20% of their professional obligation.

In addition to the above, course reduction(s) may be granted by a Department Chair, with the approval of the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs, when faculty members secure sufficient externally generated funds to allow them to offset a proportionate amount of course time or provide sufficient other benefits to the College to warrant such reduction(s), recognizing that except for the most unusual circumstances, all faculty are expected to teach at least one course a semester.

Course reduction(s) may be granted for unusual administrative or service requirements (e.g., serving as Undergraduate Curriculum Director). This reduction(s) is in addition to the service responsibilities identified in the three patterns described above and requires the approval of the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs.

### Administration

The successful administration of this policy is the primary responsibility of the chairperson of individual Departments. The Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs, in collaboration with Department Chairs, is responsible for approving exceptions to the preceding which allow variations in individual responsibilities to afford improved overall balance in a program. When such variations in responsibilities affect matters such as class size and course scheduling, they are expected to be planned by the relevant Department Chairs, normally one full year in advance.

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<sup>1</sup>For these purposes, doctoral education is typically defined as chairing dissertation committees, administering doctoral qualifying examinations, and teaching at the graduate level.