

Illinois State University

College of Engineering Workload Policy

I. Introduction and Purpose

The Illinois State University College of Engineering is committed to excellence in undergraduate education, fostering innovation through scholarly activities, and serving the university and professional communities. This workload policy establishes guidelines for the equitable distribution of faculty responsibilities across teaching, scholarship, and service activities while supporting the College's current mission as a baccalaureate-focused institution.

This policy recognizes that engineering education requires a balance of theoretical knowledge and practical application, necessitating diverse instructional methods including laboratory work, design projects, and industry engagement. The policy provides flexibility to accommodate the varied needs of different engineering disciplines while maintaining consistency and fairness across the College.

II. General Policy Statement

The standard workload for all full-time, tenured and tenure-track faculty in the College of Engineering consists of excelling in teaching, scholarship, and service:

- Teaching and Mentorship: Primary emphasis reflecting our baccalaureate mission
- Scholarship: Research, creative activities, and professional development
- Service: Department, college, university, and professional service

The standard teaching workload is equivalent to instructional excellence in eighteen (18) credit hours per academic year, typically distributed as three (3) courses per semester (9 credit hours per semester). The remaining six (6) credit hours per year are to be used for meaningful engagement in scholarship, service to the department, college and university, and contributing to the engineering profession.

III. Teaching Workload Specifications

Routinely expected professional obligations of teaching for a tenure-track faculty in the College of Engineering include, but are not limited to:

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- Holding office hours for assigned courses
- Assessing and evaluating assigned courses
- Designing and updating course materials
- Disseminating course evaluations
- Coordinating with section/sequence leaders on course design
- Mentoring capstone project groups

A. Standard Course Load

- Tenure-track and Tenured Faculty: 18 credit hours per academic year (e.g. three 3-credit courses per semester).

B. Course and Activity Equivalencies

- Capstone projects: In excess of the base expectations for advising capstone projects (see Section V. Service Responsibilities), every 12 student credit hours per semester is equivalent to 1 CHE (up to a maximum of 3 CHE). Exceptions to this policy may be negotiated and approved by the department chair and the Dean.
- Large enrollment courses: 50-75 students enrolled: 1 1/3 times the standard course credit, 76-100: 1 2/3 times the standard course credit, >100 students enrolled: 2 times the standard course credit.
- Courses with fewer than 12 students enrolled may receive less than the CHE for the course, this must be discussed with and approved by the department chair and the Dean.
- Undergraduate research and independent study supervision: as approved by the department chair and the Dean.

C. Engineering-Specific Activities

- For ABET accreditation preparation and coordination, the department chair may allocate a total of 7 CHE over the course of the 6-year ABET accreditation cycle. Not to exceed one (1) faculty member per program per semester.

D. Course Scheduling and Preparation

- New course preparation (for courses that have not previously been taught in the college): 1.5 CHE teaching load reduction in either the semester prior to the first offering semester or in the semester of the first offering (maximum of 1 faculty per course and maximum of 3 CHE load reduction/semester).

- Significant course revision (as negotiated with and approved by the department chair and approved by the Dean.): 0.5-1 CHE teaching load reduction in the semester in which the course is revised.

IV. Scholarship and Creative Activities

Faculty are expected to maintain active engagement in scholarship appropriate to their rank and career stage. Routinely expected professional obligations of scholarship for a tenure-track faculty in the College of Engineering include peer-reviewing journal submissions, manuscripts, and textbooks. Acceptable scholarship activities include but are not limited to:

A. Research and Development

- Peer-reviewed publications in engineering, scientific and education journals and conferences
- Grant writing and funded research projects
- Patent applications and technology transfer activities
- Industry partnerships and collaborative research

B. Professional Development

- Conference presentations and professional meeting participation
- Professional licensure maintenance and continuing education
- Editorial service for professional publications

C. Applied Scholarship

- Engineering consulting aligned with academic expertise that directly benefits Illinois State University
- Standards development and regulatory committee participation

V. Service Responsibilities

Service contributions are essential to the College's operation and the advancement of the engineering profession. Service expectations increase with rank and experience. Routinely expected professional obligations of service for a tenure-track faculty in the College of Engineering include, but are not limited to:

- Advising one capstone project team equivalent to 12-15 student credit hours per semester

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- Attending college and department faculty meetings
- Mentoring students, including writing recommendations/serving as references
- Peer-reviewing journal submissions, manuscripts, and textbooks
- Serving on editorial boards of journals
- Supporting student recruitment and retention efforts

A. Internal Service

Department Level

- Department committee membership and leadership
- Faculty search committee service
- Student recruitment and retention activities
- ABET accreditation activities
- Student competition mentoring
- Laboratory coordination and equipment management
- Internship Instructor of Record

College Level

- College committees and task forces

University Level

- University-wide committees and task forces
- Academic Senate participation
- Academic policy development
- Institutional assessment activities

B. External Service

Professional Service

- Conference program committee service
- Journal manuscript reviewing
- Accreditation visiting team membership

Community Service

- K-12 STEM outreach programs
- Economic development advisory roles

VII. Workload Adjustments and Special Circumstances

Adjustments to workload can be made by the mutual agreement of the faculty member and chair and approval of the chair and the Dean.

A. New Faculty Support

First-year faculty: 3 CHE reduction in teaching load in the first semester per Section 30.02F of the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA). Additional credit for course development during the first semester (see Section III.D Course Scheduling and Preparation) will not be awarded.

B. Research-Active Faculty

Faculty with significant externally funded research may receive teaching load adjustments

- Major grant recipients: External funding may justify a reduction in semester CHE load when funding is awarded to compensate the university for the faculty's time. For each credit hour reduction, the funding received associated with the faculty's time must be equivalent to one eighteenth (1/18) of a faculty annual salary and fringe benefits.

C. Professional Development

- Conference coordination (requiring significant effort)
- Appointment and participation in a national board (National Academy of Engineering, IEEE Board of Directors, etc.)

VIII. Flexibility and Appeals

Exceptions to workload assignments must be agreed upon between the faculty member and chair, approved by the chair, and approved by the Dean. Any exception must be of benefit to the faculty member, the department and its students.

A. Departmental Variations

Individual departments may develop specific workload guidelines that vary from college policy with:

- Justification based on disciplinary needs
- Dean approval after faculty and chairperson consultation
- Annual review and assessment of effectiveness and deliverables

B. Individual Accommodations

Faculty may request workload modifications for:

- Extraordinary professional opportunities (special projects, national committees, journal editing, etc.)

IX. Definitions

Credit Hour Equivalent (CHE): A unit of measurement for faculty workload that may correspond to actual credit hours or equivalent effort in other activities.

Standard Teaching Load: The baseline expectation of 18 credit hours per academic year for tenure-track faculty.

Scholarship: Research, creative activity, and professional development that advances knowledge in engineering fields and maintains faculty expertise.

Service: Contributions to the department, college, university, profession, and community that support our mission.

X. Notes

This document will be revisited to include graduate specific workload issues one year prior to graduate program offerings in the college.