

Academic Policy Committee Report

Committee Members:

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Charges from the Senate Agenda Committee

Charge 1: The APC, in collaboration with the Provost's Office, shall provide an assessment of the **workload policy** implementation to the Faculty Senate, focusing on how well each workload policy adheres to the process and guidelines provided by the adopted Workload Policy documents and how effectively each policy has been implemented in the unit.

Charge 2: The APC shall consider extending **administrator review** to additional categories of administrator than fall within the current AEOC¹ process, and possibly propose appropriate review processes.

Charge 3: The APC shall review the relationship of the **experiential PhD** programs to existing PhD programs, and, if appropriate, make recommendations for improved alignment.

¹Academic Evaluation Oversight Committee

1. Workload Policy: Review

We began by reviewing all the workload policies that have been posted on the Provost's website:

- Found a lot of variation among workload policies.
- Decided (since this is the first year of their implementation) it is too early to determine how effective they are. (Maybe revisit next year?)
- Learned that SAC had an additional concern that some workload policies had been imposed on the unit rather than developed by the faculty in the unit.

1. Workload Policy: Faculty Survey

In order to determine whether workload policies had been developed by faculty in the unit, we devised a survey asking faculty to indicate how strongly they agree or disagree with the following three statements:

- 1 The workload policy was developed by the faculty in my department/group rather than being controlled by my Program Director/Chair/Dean.
- 2 I believe all faculty in my department/group had the opportunity to provide meaningful input in the workload policy process.
- 3 I am satisfied with the outcome of the process.

They were also given an opportunity to enter **comments**.

Numerically: “strongly agree” = 5, “strongly disagree” = 1.

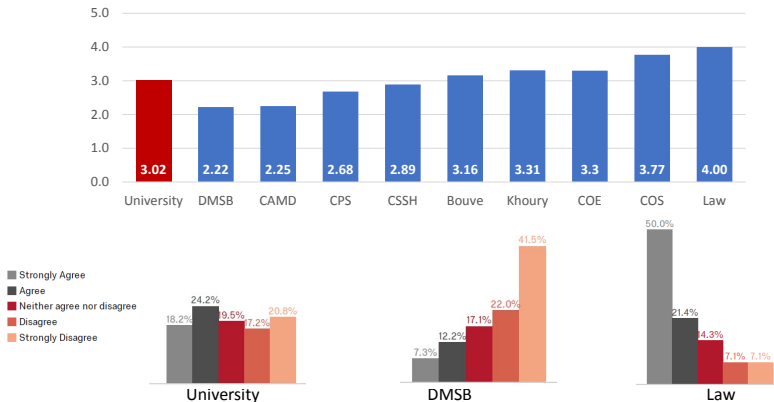
1. Workload Policy: Faculty Survey

Some aspects of the results:

- 389 faculty replied to the survey for a response rate of 26.2%
- The response rates per college ranged from 15.2% to 42.2%.
- Responses did not show a bias between T/TT and NTT faculty.
- There was, however, considerable variation between colleges.

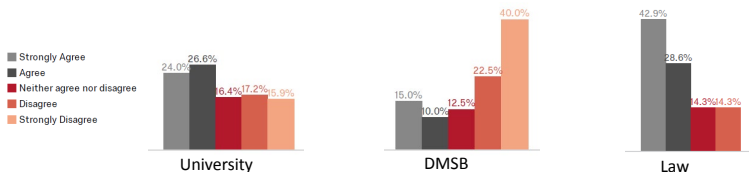
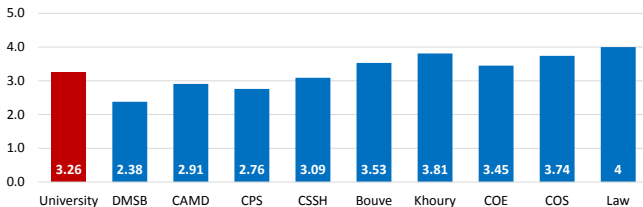
1. Workload Policy: Survey Results

The workload policy was developed by the faculty in my department/group, rather than being controlled by my Program Director/Chair/Dean.



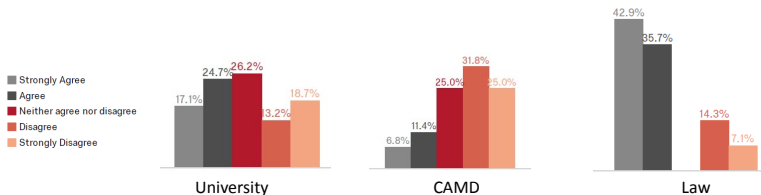
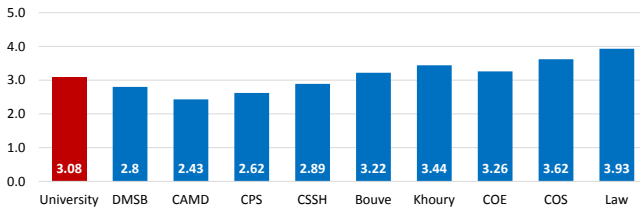
1. Workload Policy: Survey Results

I believe all faculty in my department/group had the opportunity to provide meaningful input in the workload policy process.



1. Workload Policy: Survey Results

I am satisfied with the outcome of the process.



1. Workload Policy: Survey Results

Comments

108 respondents submitted comments along with numerical data. The comments were overwhelmingly negative:

- “While we had opportunities to give feedback, our dean overruled our realistic concerns with balance and fairness in the policy.”
- “This was entirely top-down and faculty were not allowed to participate in any meaningful way.”

Some respondents addressed frustration with the policies themselves:

- “Having a policy and adhering to it are different. Service demands are much higher than the workload policy describes.”

1. Workload Policy: Recommendations

We **recommend** that

- All Deans review the workload policies of their departments with an eye for faculty participation and satisfaction with the workload policy process.
- Next year the APC look at the effectiveness of the implementation of the workload policies in the various academic units.

2. Additional Administrator Review

As background, there are currently 39 Administrators (11 Deans and 28 Department Chairs) that are reviewed by the AEOC.

We used college organization charts to identify additional administrators who might benefit from faculty review.

Criteria for potential faculty review:

- Faculty appointment;
- If reports to the Dean, then has direct contact or impact on faculty;
- If unit head, then has direct oversight of faculty and programs.

2. Additional Administrator Review

Amongst faculty administrators not currently in the AEOC review, we:

- Identified 38 administrators who report to the dean of their college;
- Identified 39 “unit heads” who have oversight of programs;
 - Those highlighted below function like a department chair (i.e. assess faculty performance, determine workloads, oversee of budgets, etc.)

	Currently Reviewed		Potential Review (direct report to Dean)					Unit Head Equivalent - Potential Review					
	Dean	Chair	Sr. Dean	Sr. Assoc. Dean	Assoc. Dean	Asst. Dean	Director	Program Director	Faculty Director	Asst Dean of School	Group Chairs	Director of School	Director
SOL	1				3								1
Bouve	3	6			5			1		2			
DMSB	1			1	1						7		
COS	1	6			3								
CAMD	1	4	1		2							2	
COE	1	5		1	2								
CPS	1				2				7				
CSSH	1	7			4		3	8				2	
CCIS	1			1	5		4						9
Subtotals	11	28	1	3	27	0	7	9	7	2	7	4	10
Totals	39		38					39					
													12

Recommend add to AEOC Review 12

2. Additional Administrator Review

After discussion, we decided:

- It is important to include in the AEOC review the 12 faculty who act like department chairs: this increases the number from 39 to 51.
- Including all associate deans, directors, and other administrators who report directly to the dean would add too many additional administrators to be reviewed by the AEOC.
- Amongst all administrators who report directly to the Dean, priority for faculty review should be given to those who interact regularly with faculty; the deans know who these people are and may know best how to obtain faculty input into their annual review.

2. Additional Administrator Review: Proposals

Resolution

Whereas there are a number of faculty with administrative appointments who might benefit from faculty input during performance review,

Be it resolved that the Senate recommends that deans identify their administrative appointees who interact regularly with faculty and for whom faculty input would be valuable as part of their review, with the mechanism(s) for this faculty input left to the dean's discretion. The Administrator Evaluation Process is an option for those administrative appointees whose function is similar to that of department chair.

Recommendation

We further recommend that the 12 specific academic administrators identified in our review be added to the list of those evaluated by the AEOC.

3. Experiential PhD Programs

Experiential PhDs are an Institutional Priority:

- According to the academic plan, Northeastern 2025 “will infuse global experiential learning into doctoral education.” *
- Northeastern will “offer all PhD students experiential learning opportunities outside of their primary research group.” **
- Current opportunities for experiential learning at the PhD level vary significantly in structure and scale.
- We identified questions about the design and implementation of future opportunities for experiential learning at the PhD level.

*<https://www.northeastern.edu/academic-plan/plan/>

** <https://phd.northeastern.edu/experientialphd/>

3. Experiential PhD Programs

Our committee had several conversations with Sara Wadia-Fascetti, Vice-Chancellor for the PhD Network. We learned:

- “Experiential PhD” refers to adding an experiential component to an existing degree program;
- The form of this experiential component will vary significantly between disciplines and graduate programs.

After more discussion, however, we concluded

- Since the experiential PhD is an important part of the University's 2025 plan, the administration and faculty should develop guidelines for the development and/or expansion of experiential components.

3. Experiential PhD Programs: Recommendations

Our committee **recommends** that guidelines be developed by the administration and faculty to:

- Establish a balance between on-campus and off-campus experiential learning opportunities;
- Ensure that new experiential degree components do not detract from or displace existing requirements;
- Provide guidance on conflicts of interest that may arise during an experiential PhD.

And we **recommend** that program leaders:

- Create mechanisms to ensure that students receive ongoing faculty mentorship and are progressing towards clearly defined research goals;
- Define criteria for establishing, vetting, and evaluating experiential learning partnerships.

Thank You