Faculty Development Committee Report

December 1, 2021

Committee members: Darin Detwiler, Vaso Lykourinou, Neal Lerner, Frances McSherry, Ted Miller, Lorna Hayward

Context for a Remote Work Policy

- FDC Faculty Survey Results 2020-21: NUFlex hybrid before 2020 only 39% of faculty felt comfortable using the technology. Concerns related to technology support.

- Full-time in person to full-time remote is a spectrum—NUFlex is in between.

- NU Flex hybrid teaching is different from remote due to extra workload and technological support required. Teaching two classes simultaneously.

- NU global and mobility aspirations are not reflected in the policy as currently presented—the remote policy was temporary and changed three times since March 2020.

- Policy needs to be flexible due to the changing nature of our students, more global nature of society, and continuation of the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Fall 2021 term, there was no announcement regarding the submission of remote work requests from the faculty. Faculty were encouraged to return to campus indicating there was no policy for remote work.

- The policy should be based on transparency, convenience, safety, and flexibility (Less top down, more collaborative).

Teaching: Policy Recommendations

Colleges/Degree Programs should provide:

1. Specifications of quality that apply to their mission, any required certifications for faculty preparation, legal requirements, and training preparation faculty must engage in that is deemed essential for flexibility.

2. Specific bottom line metrics used to decide whether a course can be hybrid, 100% online, or 100% on ground, considering feasibility. (Considering Labs, performance in person, and accreditation requirements, for example.)

3. Explicitly formulated guidelines for a range of % of online teaching, a minimum of days of the week, or semesters faculty could choose to deliver instruction online and/or blend it with in person, as needed.

4. Additional guidance related to experiential education (clinical, coop, local, global).

These recommendations will provide an essential pathway to decentralize the top down and unclear process by which faculty structure their courses during the ongoing pandemic. Flexibility is needed to support faculty creativity while recognizing their needs as human beings and professionals thereby recognizing the presence of high levels of stress, burn out, and a sense of hopelessness.

Flexibility needs within policy:

1. Use Canvas and NUFlex during snow days, faculty travel, illness, and for issues related to family stability.
2. Faculty office hours on zoom—drop in more convenient, or by appointment in person.

Research/Scholarship: Policy Recommendations

- Allow flexibility in faculty handling of research duties with regular remote days as each faculty member decides best how to accommodate research teams meetings and laboratory work.

- Tenure clock considerations should continue due to COVID – 19 pandemic.
- Increased NURes infrastructure to support cross disciplinary mentoring, networking, grant submissions, and post award—all of which are more important during pandemic conditions.

Service: Policy Recommendations

Context: during the past year and a half every faculty on campus, regardless of rank and title, were engaged in an exponentially large number of meetings, committees, formal and informal discussions, and working with students for longer hours and outside of formally defined workloads.

- Service metrics must reflect the effort faculty engaged in during the pandemic. Increased service engagement should be accounted for in promotion dossiers and annual merit reports/workload policy.

- Move administrative staff and other committee meetings to remote mode, when possible, to decrease the volume of face-to-face meetings on campus, reduce carbon footprint, and create flexibility and greater inclusion for meetings.

- Evaluate in person engagement with community partners (local and global) depending on the population served—children, adults, immunocompromised--due to safety concerns.

Conclusions: Remote Work Policy

Should be:

1. transparent, and consider convenience, safety, and flexibility.

2. more collaborative with less top-down decision-making originating from upper administration.

3. Inclusive of input at all levels (college, departments, degree programs), collaborative and inclusive of faculty input.