

Chapter 4 Faculty Duties and Responsibilities

USC Upstate recognizes the customary threefold role of faculty members including teaching, service and scholarship.

4.0 TEACHING

Introduction

Teaching encompasses both instruction and a broad range of faculty-student relationships.

Individual attributes may vary, and the extent to which individuals exhibit an attribute may differ, but the following traits are those which are commonly valued in a teacher: command of subject matter; familiarity with advances in one's field; organization and presentation of material in a confident and logical manner through the use of a variety of methods; active involvement of students in the learning process; capacity to awaken in students an awareness of the general objectives of one's discipline; ability to make one's discipline relevant to the students' lives and values; ability to guide advanced students to creative work; maintenance of a high standard of achievement among all students; and fairness and good judgment in grading students' performance.

Librarian faculty members contribute to the educational mission of the University in a variety of ways that involve direct interaction with students and faculty as well as services that support the curriculum. The following traits are those commonly valued in a librarian: command of the principles of librarianship; familiarity with advances in librarianship and ability to serve users by anticipating and contributing to their needs through reference and/or research consultations, library instruction, collection development or by improving systems of organization or retrieval of information; the ability to effectively coordinate library programs and services, and to contribute to the administration of library activities by developing library policies and procedures.

4.1 Performance Indicators for Teaching Effectiveness

Individual unit criteria for annual reviews and promotion tenure provide specific performance indicators for each unit. These criteria are located on the Promotion and Tenure site.

4.2 CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

While faculty members have latitude in their approaches to subject matter, consistency in certain elements of classroom structure are essential to effective functioning of the academic enterprise.

4.2a Course Syllabi and Learning Outcomes

Faculty members are responsible for clearly stating the objectives of each course they teach at the beginning of each term. Instruction should be directed toward the fulfillment of course objectives and achievement of learning outcomes. Faculty members are responsible for ensuring that the content of the courses that they teach conforms to the course descriptions published in the *USC Upstate Academic Catalog*. Faculty members are expected to distribute to students and file with their dean and department chair copies of current syllabi for courses taught. Faculty teaching courses remotely in online or other modes are expected to post the syllabus in their online course materials. Syllabi should include information for students stating faculty expectations, how learning is to be assessed, and grades computed.

4.2b Class Meetings

Faculty workload in any teaching modality is calculated on credit hour offerings where, according to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), one credit hour meets the federal regulations for “no less than one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours out of class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester” or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time, recognizing that programs may exercise flexibility both in the ratio of direct instruction and out-of-class work and in the delivery method of instruction.

4.2c Instructional Modalities

Academic units may design and offer synchronous or asynchronous hybrid, online or other distance-based courses and programs to meet the needs of the USC Upstate student body. Depending on academic unit and program needs, some faculty members may be hired with a predominantly or entirely online, hybrid or distance-based course load.

All teaching faculty should be proficient in methods appropriate to the teaching modality employed.

New faculty members are required to complete a course in online teaching or provide evidence of training completed through another institution prior to teaching any online course offerings. This training course is offered through the Center for Academic Innovation and Faculty Support (CAIFS). Faculty developing courses are expected to follow their academic unit guidelines for distance education and online learning design, delivery, assessment, and evaluation.

Faculty members teaching face-to-face or remote courses with synchronous instruction are expected to meet regularly scheduled classes at scheduled times. Faculty teaching flipped, hybrid, online or other distance-based courses with asynchronous instruction are expected to meet the required credit-hours criteria through a combination of strategies which may include online lectures, simulations, discussions, case studies, interactive programs or textbooks, or other text-based or multimedia materials beyond the assigned course texts as well as faculty-student and student-student interactions that serve as the counterpart to face-to-face class participation.

In case of illness or any other emergency, faculty members notify the dean or the department chair so that appropriate action may be taken.

4.2d Class Attendance Policy

Subject to certain limitations described in the Academic Catalog, instructors of record are responsible for determining the attendance and participation policies appropriate to their individual courses.

If an instructor intends to assign a grade penalty for absence or a grade for participation the instructor must:

- Inform students in writing how attendance and participation will be measured, particularly as such measurement goes beyond recording students' mere presence in the classroom for all or part of a class session;
- Maintain current, verifiable records;
- Take care to apply attendance and participation policies consistently and fairly for all students; and
- Recognize that failure to comply could constitute grounds for a grade appeal.

Instructors who do not intend to assign a grade penalty for absence or a grade for participation, are not required to keep a record of attendance; however, all instructors are encouraged to do so whenever practical. Federal law requires institutions to document the last day of participation for enrolled students who fail to complete a course.

Instructors must allow make-up work or an alternative means for earning credit for excused absences as described in the catalog policy.

Any instructor assessing a grade penalty for unexcused absences must specify in the course syllabus the percentage of allowable unexcused absences (following any limitations in the current academic catalog) and any penalty to a student's grade for each unexcused absence in excess of the allowed amount. Online courses should specify any penalties for not participating in activities in the allotted time without a valid excuse. (amended 3/15/2024)

4.2e Office Hours

Teaching involves more than classroom or online interaction with students. Teaching also includes spontaneous interaction involving courses, career counseling, advisement, and conversations outside of disciplinary matters. All faculty members teaching both traditional and online classes must post and maintain office hours. All faculty members should hold 1 hour of synchronous weekly office hours per course they are teaching, with a minimum expectation of 1 hour and a maximum expectation of 5 hours. Faculty are expected to maintain office hours at scheduled times, preferably not on a single day, and to establish and post specific channels of contact (e.g. chat, text, phone, videoconference, face-to-face, or other synchronous communication applications). Faculty members are to post their office hours for students (outside their office and/or on their learning management site) and to submit a copy of their office hours to their dean or department chair.

Faculty members have a responsibility to make a good faith effort to honor students' requests for meetings by appointment within reason and at mutually acceptable times. (amended 3/15/2024)

4.3 ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE

Faculty members are responsible for informing students in their classes of the methods employed in determining the final course grade. At the request of the student, a faculty member should make available information, an evaluation, or both, of the student's progress. Faculty members should provide students with an appraisal of their progress in the course prior to the published drop date.

Faculty are expected to participate in all assessment and retention initiatives.

4.3a Grading

As an essential element to ensure success of first-year students, faculty members teaching courses where first-year students are enrolled are expected to apprise students of their course progress early and often.

Examinations, papers and other assignments are graded within sufficient time to make meaningful contributions to the student's learning experience and are provided to the student for inspection and discussion. Similar to their face-to-face counterparts, online and other asynchronous courses should offer multiple, regular opportunities for detailed feedback from faculty on student work throughout the course. See unit guidelines for distance education and online learning for expectations about frequency,

response time, and other policies for student-faculty interactions through graded work.

4.3b Final Examinations

Final examinations are scheduled at the end of each semester or term. A calendar of examination times is published by the Office of the Registrar each semester. All final examinations must be administered during the time published in the calendar for examinations. Faculty teaching online or other asynchronous and/or distance-based courses may either administer the final examination online or as a proctored test in a controlled testing environment. Exceptions from this policy should be addressed to the department chair or dean. Instructors may allow students to switch from one examination section to another when that instructor teaches multiple sections of the same course. Laboratory examinations are normally scheduled during the last meeting of the lab.

Final examinations are retained for one semester to provide the opportunity for review with the instructor if the student desires.

4.3c Grading System

For a detailed discussion of the current grading system, consult the "Grading System" section of the Academic Regulations of the current issue of the *USC Upstate Academic Catalog*.

4.3d Grade Reports and Changes of Grades

All final grades are due by the date and time requested by the Registrar. Grades are entered electronically by the faculty of record. All students on the grade sheet must be assigned a grade. If a grade is assigned in error, the faculty member completes a change of grade form and submits it to the Registrar. Grade changes must be approved by the Academic Affairs Committee.

In accordance with the 1998 policy of the American Association of University Professors titled *Academic Freedom and Assignment of Course Grades*, faculty members have the right to assign grades based upon their professional assessment of student performance or upon standards agreed to in advance among faculty colleagues. Administrators may assign grades only if the teacher of record becomes incapacitated or unable to perform this function. All changes to grades must undergo review through faculty-approved processes.

4.4 ADVISING

The University highly values strong advisement as a component of the role of teaching faculty. The extent and skill of a faculty member's participation in the general guidance and advising of students and contributions to student welfare are of importance in appraising a teacher's value to the University. A teacher's ability to communicate effectively with students is valued.

Integral elements of effective advising include knowledge of university academic regulations and curriculum requirements, knowledge of student referral resources, and responsiveness to student questions and concerns.

4.5 EVALUATION OF TEACHING

Essential to the mission of USC Upstate is excellent teaching. Teaching is evaluated in a variety of ways. Student evaluations of teaching must be conducted according to university procedures. Faculty members are also encouraged to develop mid-semester evaluations or other measures as a supplement to university-administered student evaluations.

In addition, evaluations of teaching by reviewing administrators, peer evaluations, and/or formal observations and consultations through the Center for Academic Innovation and Faculty Support offer valuable assessments of faculty members' teaching and suggestions for improvement of courses and pedagogical approaches. Faculty teaching online and distance-based courses may find any unit-specific evaluation procedures outlined in their academic unit's guidelines for distance education and online learning.

Ongoing course design and improvement and participation in faculty development activities related to teaching are considered further evidence that faculty members are fulfilling their teaching responsibilities.

4.6 SERVICE

Faculty members have a responsibility to help enable the University to accomplish its mission through service to the University, the community and the profession. Since faculty members play an important role in the formulation of University policies, recognition is given to those who participate effectively in faculty governance and the development of institutional procedures, whether assigned or assumed voluntarily. Service includes contributions to local, state, national and international communities; and service leading to the advancement of a profession. Additional remuneration or University release time does not lessen the worth of such contribution in evaluating a candidate's performance.

Individual unit criteria for annual reviews and promotion and tenure, located on the Promotion and Tenure site, provide examples of specific performance indicators.

4.7 SCHOLARSHIP AND CREATIVITY

One of the responsibilities of faculty members is scholarship and creativity. Scholarship and creativity vary depending upon academic disciplines. Individual unit criteria for promotion and tenure and annual reviews provide examples of specific performance indicators. Commonly valued contributions include, but are not limited to, application of knowledge in one's academic field of interest; publication of scholarly books; articles in scholarly refereed journals; refereed conference proceedings; other publications; professional reports and reviews; scholarly presentations at state, regional, national and international conferences; participation in projects of scholarly interest; successful application for external grants; and public scholarship (See Appendix IV for statement about public scholarship).

In certain fields, such as art, music, and literature, distinguished creativity and performance receive consideration equivalent to distinction attained in research and other scholarly endeavors. Creative activities often receive public recognition as reflected in professional awards, the assignment of special tasks and commissions, the acceptance of the faculty member's work in permanent collections, publication in leading professional journals or multiple publications of a significant article, invitations to participate in juried exhibits, and any other public honor.

Applied research and consultation for business, industry, government, education, and service agencies are also included. Because librarians' scholarship and creativity may also include facilitating the work of others, significant contributions to the research or scholarly work of others and participation in scholarly projects that result in the better organization of information or access to information are valued.

Additional remuneration or course release time for scholarship and creativity does not lessen the worth of such contribution in evaluating a faculty member's performance.

Individual unit criteria for annual reviews and promotion and tenure, located on the Promotion and Tenure site, provide examples of specific performance indicators.