

## **Guidelines for Responsible Behavior by Standing Faculty in the School of Arts and Sciences**

Our University is, at its core, a collectivity of scholars and students dedicated to the creation, articulation, and dissemination of knowledge. In pursuit of those goals, the University has explicitly recognized, in its Faculty Handbook, the importance of fostering and protecting academic freedom in teaching and in scholarly inquiry. Standing Faculty members, all of whom enjoy this freedom, are obliged to carry out with the utmost seriousness and purposefulness their responsibilities as teachers, scholars, and active participants in the governance of their departments, School, and University.

The aim of the present guidelines is to assist them in doing so. The guidelines enunciate a set of principles and practices that command widespread assent. They are not intended as a set of rigid rules but rather as a codification of normal practice. They are consistent with provisions in the Faculty Handbook and are based upon the assumption that standing faculty abide by the rules set down in that document.

The sections that follow deal with the faculty's responsibilities in the areas of teaching and mentoring, research, and service. It is recognized that circumstances vary from department to department and from person to person. Faculty members make a wide range of contributions, which may differ within and across academic departments and at different stages in an individual's career. Decisions about the distribution of faculty efforts among teaching, research and service are not entirely a matter of individual choice but are reached after consultation with department chairs and/or the appropriate deans of the School. Subject to provisions of the Faculty Handbook, decisions by tenured faculty members about retirement or withdrawal from the University are a matter of individual choice. However, their decisions are attentive to the well being of the institution that has invested such authority and responsibility in them.

### **A. Teaching and Mentoring**

Teaching--helping students learn--is the responsibility of the faculty of the School. All members of the standing faculty participate in teaching. Teaching in the School takes many forms: large lectures in which the audience can number one hundred or more; small courses and seminars; private discussions with undergraduates and graduate students; and reading and responding thoughtfully to student examinations, papers, and other written materials. Teaching takes place by example as well as by direct instruction. The example presented by faculty members is one of dedication to the advancement and dissemination of knowledge and to the institutions that embody these goals.

Each faculty member agrees, when he or she joins a department, to teach a representative fraction of the department's course offerings. Faculty members cooperate with department chairs in determining a teaching schedule that is consistent with departmental goals and with the faculty member's expertise and obligations. Except within the context of specially-designated on-line courses, electronic instructional and communication tools are intended to supplement, not replace, face-to-face contact with students inside and outside the classroom.

## 1. Teaching Classes

Faculty meet all classes in person as scheduled, from the first until the last day of the semester, in order to ensure the intellectual quality and continuity of the course. Only compelling personal or professional reasons interfere with meeting this expectation. Faculty make every effort to reschedule missed classes or to find qualified substitutes. All substitute arrangements are made with the knowledge of the chair of the department. When illness or emergencies necessitate cancellation of more than one week of class, the faculty member consults with the chair to oversee coverage of the course.

Faculty commit themselves to the highest quality of teaching, whether in the format of large lectures, smaller classes, seminars, or laboratory supervision. Faculty participate in departmental efforts to assess and improve their teaching by collecting advice from their students and seeking advice from colleagues. They protect the academic freedom of their students and make every reasonable effort to ensure honest academic conduct among them.

When they are teaching, faculty members are regularly accessible to students through weekly posted office hours or by electronic mail that permits reasonably rapid responses. Faculty are available to students in person by appointment for advice, guidance, and consultation from the beginning to the end of the entire academic year. Departments and faculty establish procedures to ensure such availability. Faculty uphold the highest standards of respect and civility in their relations with students, including the keeping of appointments. Faculty are available at the conclusion of the term for discussion with students of their final exams and grades. If this proves impossible, they arrange with the graduate or undergraduate chair of the department for a substitute faculty member who can act on their behalf.

Faculty prepare a syllabus for each course at the beginning of the term that includes information about the anticipated course requirements and methods of evaluation. Throughout the course, the assignments and standards of evaluation are clear and are applied fairly. Faculty are responsible for assuring that all readings are available, whether by purchase or on reserve in University libraries.

Faculty grade all work in a timely manner. Departments establish time norms with the understanding, for example, that it is unreasonable for undergraduates to wait longer than three weeks for the return of written work, or for graduate students to wait longer than six weeks for the return of chapters and dissertations. Faculty turn in grades at the end of each semester and enable students to receive detailed feedback about their work.

## 2. Student Advising

Faculty have an important role in advising students at all levels of their academic careers: as first-year and second-year students, as majors, and as graduate students. The assistant deans for advising, peer advisers, and undergraduate and graduate chairs are essential sources of information about fulfilling the general and major requirements and gaining required assistance. The faculty, however, can provide valuable advice about courses, majors, and career paths. They are also essential guides, both by instruction and by example, to the purposes and standards of academic life.

In taking on a student as advisee, a faculty member assumes a commitment to be available to that student through the designated period. If unforeseen circumstances arise that

prevent the faculty member from carrying out the advisory function, he or she arranges with the College of Arts and Sciences, or the graduate or undergraduate chair, for the advising responsibilities be taken over by another faculty member.

- a. Advising first and second year undergraduates. Academic advising is one of the most important resources available to undergraduates who wish to make the most of their years at Penn. This advising and mentorship responsibility is widely shared among members of the standing faculty. All faculty have informal responsibility to mentor and advise students on academic matters and career options; some faculty are appointed to serve as formal academic advisors for first and second year undergraduates. Those faculty appointed as academic advisors are responsible for consulting with entering students, for reviewing their course registration plans in the fall and spring pre-registration periods, and for consultation about any difficulties that arise during the academic year. The faculty advisor works with the student through the second year and supports the student in the choice of a major. As valuable members of the College advising community, well-informed faculty play a crucial role in assisting students as they create a meaningful educational plan that takes full advantage of Penn's academic opportunities.
- b. Advising undergraduate majors. Faculty are collectively responsible for advising majors in their departments or programs. Departments have different structures for sharing advising responsibilities for majors, but whatever the structure of formal advising relationships, no faculty member is exempt from the responsibility to provide information and guidance when asked by a student. In order to be effective advisors in the major, faculty members stay well-informed regarding the major requirements and options for study within the major. More important, they help the student to see the significance of studying his or her chosen field.
- c. Advising graduate students early in their graduate career. Before graduate students begin their dissertations, faculty members help guide them to courses, to research opportunities, to important scholarly works, and to other faculty members.

### 3. Faculty as Graduate Student Mentors

This section deals with the relationship between graduate students and those faculty members who have come to be recognized as their principal mentors in research. The stage in a graduate career at which this relationship is established may vary from department to department. From the viewpoint of the graduate student, the advisor-student relationship is probably the single most important component of graduate education. From the viewpoint of the professor, it is primarily through graduate students that the continuity of his or her approach to research and scholarship is assured.

The principal faculty advisor serves several important functions. He or she takes primary responsibility for the student's research and also advises on other aspects of the student's activities as a graduate student. In relation to the student's research activities, the advisor strives to preserve two delicate balances: between providing guidance and fostering independence, and between criticism and encouragement. In relation to other aspects of the student's activities, the advisor does what he or she can to ensure that the student is well prepared for a career of teaching, scholarship, and research, and that this preparation is achieved expeditiously. The

advisor's role includes encouraging publication (independent when feasible) and participation in scholarly meetings. It also includes assisting in job placement, including the writing of letters of recommendation. Assistance in career preparation also includes instruction in the ethics of research and guidance in writing research papers and making oral presentations.

It is often in the student's interest to engage in research or scholarship under the direction of more than one faculty member. If so, the advisor should encourage and facilitate such opportunities, e.g., through laboratory rotations. In general, it is desirable that a student have an advisory committee so that he or she has an intellectual relationship with other faculty members who will in turn take a direct interest in the student's development. The organization of these committees is the responsibility of the graduate group, but the principal advisor should play an active role in ensuring their success. Both the student and the advisor should be able to end the advising relationship unilaterally.

When there is research collaboration between student and advisor, frank and open discussion of the division of credit and criteria for authorship should occur as early as possible. The student's contribution to the research effort should be reflected in accordance with the policy of the graduate group.

#### 4. The Management of Teaching Assistantships and the Supervision of Student Teaching

Graduate student participation in the teaching of undergraduates contributes to the instructional mission of the School of Arts and Sciences. It is also an important component of graduate training. Both of these goals must be recognized in managing teaching assistantships. The principal faculty member in a course is responsible for achieving these educational goals. He or she recognizes that graduate students need guidance to improve their effectiveness as teachers. Over the course of a student's graduate years, this guidance will include participating in exam construction, grading, consulting with individual undergraduates, and supervised classroom teaching when the student is prepared for it. The faculty and student responsibilities associated with a teaching assistantship should be made explicit.

### **B. Research**

Faculty members in the School of Arts and Sciences are dedicated to advancing knowledge in their fields of inquiry. They pursue this goal through programs of research and scholarship that reflect their passion for understanding the natural and social world and that are guided by their preparation and readiness to follow a particular line of inquiry. They speak the truth as they see it and use evidence as the ultimate criterion for their conclusions. They exhibit the highest standards of intellectual honesty and self-discipline, including the acknowledgement of intellectual debts. The fruits of their research are conveyed through scholarly publications, presentations to learned societies, and in their teaching. Scholars exhibit concern for the success of their field of endeavor through service to professional associations, universities and other scholarly organizations, and to fellow scholars. They respect and defend the right of free inquiry within the University and throughout their disciplines.

The Faculty Handbook explicitly recognizes the importance of the research component of faculty activities. It states (Section II.E.1.): "Appointments are made to the standing faculty of teacher-scholars whose research and publication are expected to continue throughout their active careers. Teaching loads at the University of Pennsylvania generally reflect that a significant part of the faculty member's time will be devoted to research." Accordingly, faculty members

conduct research and contribute to the published literature in their field up to the time of their retirement or withdrawal from the University.

### **C. Service to Department, School, and University**

The mission of the University and the School of Arts and Sciences is to expand knowledge and opportunities for the pursuit of knowledge. They provide the essential organizational context within which faculty members perform their scholarly and pedagogical roles. The integrity of these institutions, and therefore the ability of the faculty to be productive teachers and scholars, requires that a significant expenditure of faculty time be devoted to the successful governance and operation of these institutions.

All members of the standing faculty of SAS have a responsibility to make significant contributions to the effective operation of the University, the School of Arts and Sciences, and their department. Such contributions include serving on committees, attending faculty meetings, participating in personnel decisions, mentoring junior colleagues, and participating in the governing bodies of the faculty. They may also include working with Alumni groups and making other efforts to reach broad constituencies on behalf of the University. Valuable service can also be expressed by participating in University activities in the immediately surrounding community. The tenured faculty have a special responsibility in the area of service because of the trust that has been placed in them by the institution.