

SUBJECT: Faculty Availability

DATE: June 2018

PURPOSE: To provide guidance regarding the expectation that faculty members in the College of Human Sciences are regularly present at their assigned duty point during normal working hours. Related TTU OPs: [32.06](#), [32.32](#), [70.06](#)

REVIEW: The policy will be reviewed when changes are made to the process or related TTU OPs.

POLICY

As noted in [OP 32.06](#) the responsibilities of the university dictate, to a major extent, the responsibilities of the individual faculty member. The faculty member is properly concerned with the whole process of education and is aware of the responsibilities of the university in a free society. Responsibility is assumed for performing several essential functions: teaching, research, creative activity, university service, professional service, and community service/outreach/engagement.

- Teaching responsibility includes regular conduct of classes at scheduled periods or equivalent effort with online classes. In addition to these fundamental teaching functions, faculty members have teaching responsibilities as a counselor and should devote a reasonable portion of time to aiding, guiding, and counseling students outside the classroom (both graduate and undergraduate students). There is also the responsibility to engage in a continual and critical study of the subject matter of one's discipline to ensure that classes contain the most current and useful knowledge and that the course being taught is consistent with the course of study outlined by a department or college.
- Through research and creative activity, a faculty member grows intellectually, stimulates student learning, and adds to the accumulated knowledge of a discipline. A faculty member should strive constantly to contribute to the growth and understanding of knowledge in one's particular field through research, scholarship, and/or creative activity. The faculty member has an additional responsibility to share the results of study by disseminating it to students, colleagues, professionals in one's discipline, and to the public.
- A faculty member has a responsibility to participate in the various activities, programs, and functions related to the enhancement of the department, college, and university such as participating in the formulation of academic policies, serving on committees, and taking part in other assignments. Within one's field of competence, and as time and resources permit, the faculty member has a responsibility to respond to requests for advice and aid and to participate in the activities of one's profession and the community. The faculty member should exercise care to assure that these activities do not infringe upon other obligations and responsibilities to the university.

A faculty member, as a professional employee of the university, is given great latitude and independence in carrying out the above obligations and responsibilities. In a similar vein, as a professional employee, there are great expectations for participation and engagement with the department, college, and university in carrying out the obligations responsibilities inherent in such a position. While there are explicit duties and expectations as noted above, there is also an overarching

expectation that faculty members be present on campus and involved with the broader activities of the university, college, and department.

While faculty members are in no way expected to punch a time clock, it is important that they generally be present and available daily during normal business hours. This availability facilitates student contact, interaction with colleagues, ability for committee meetings, and in general promotes teamwork and camaraderie. As with any professional position, there are expectations beyond the business day that might impact the time available during the next day, such as teaching a night class, advising a student organization that meets in the evening, etc. However, those would be exceptions to the general expectation of presence during normal business hours.

As a part of being present and involved, faculty members are expected to set and hold office hours for students. The minimum is five hours per week unless the department policy states otherwise. Office hours must be included on syllabi and should be posted on the faculty member's office door. It is also a best practice to maintain a master list of office hours in the department office. During office hours (and preferably much of the day) the faculty member's office door should be open making them easily available. Of course faculty members can work on other activities during office hours if no students are in their office, but the priority activity during those times is the student. During the remainder of the time each day, there may be times when faculty members need to work on projects that require quiet and concentration such as course development, research, writing, etc. During those times it may be necessary to close the office door with a note that asks that the faculty member not be disturbed and giving a time when they would be available again.

In confirmation of these expectations, [OP 32.06.4](#) points out that "a faculty member has a responsibility to participate in the various activities, programs, and functions related to the enhancement of the university such as participating in the formulation of academic policies, serving on university committees, and taking part in other assignments;" availability for and participation in these activities entails routine faculty availability. The OP goes to state in Section 5 that faculty members "should exercise care to avoid infringement upon obligations and responsibilities to the university." While this section refers to professional service activities, it also applies generally to any activity, professional or non-professional, that infringes on time for which the faculty is paid by the university. [OP 70.06](#) notes that an employee "must, during normal working hours, conduct university business only at the employee's regular or assigned temporary duty point, which for faculty members, is on campus. In no event shall an employee's personal residence be deemed that employee's regular or assigned temporary place of employment or duty point without the written approval of the chancellor or the president." Finally [OP 32.32](#) notes that "neglect of professional responsibilities" is a consideration in faculty performance evaluation. Consistent absenteeism/unavailability by faculty members falls within that category.

Documents Included

[OP 32.06 Faculty Responsibility](#)

[OP 70.06 Employee Working Hours](#)

[OP 32.32 Performance Evaluation of Faculty](#)