

FACULTY REFERENCE MANUAL

Policies & Procedures for The University of North Carolina School of Law

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<https://my.law.unc.edu/community/facstaff/faculty/>

Summer 2009 Edition

Class schedules are on the web at: <https://my.law.unc.edu/academics/schedules/>.
Examination schedules are located at: <https://my.law.unc.edu/academics/exams/>.

B. Teaching

1. Teaching Assignments

The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs prepares the course schedule and makes course assignments based first on curricular needs and second based on individual faculty members' requests. During the fall semester, each faculty member is asked to indicate teaching preferences for the upcoming academic year. Proposed new course offerings and significant changes in the subject matter of existing offerings should be referred to the Academic Affairs Committee for review and approval and, if approved, recommendation to the full faculty. In the spring, the faculty reviews and approves the curriculum for the following year, including new and significantly changed offerings.

2. Teaching Loads

The typical teaching load for faculty is a total of 10 hours for the fall and spring semesters combined. Credit for supervising independent studies is earned at the rate of 0.1 credit hours for a three-hour Independent Study. See also Banking Excess Hours at B.7. below for more details.

3. Writing Courses

Faculty members who teach courses designated as Rigorous Writing Experiences (RWE) or Writing Experiences (WE) are expected to provide individualized feedback to students aimed at improving their writing and analytical skills. See *Academic Advising Handbook* at <https://my.law.unc.edu/academics/advising/handbooksection.aspx?cid=14&handbook=3> for a description of these writing courses.

4. Independent Study

A student is permitted to enroll in independent studies under the supervision of a member of the full-time faculty for a maximum of three hours of academic credit. Before registering for an independent study, the student must obtain the consent of the supervising faculty member (usually recorded on a form provided by the Registrar). A member of the faculty is under no duty to accept an independent study project. Any project accepted must fall within the study interests of both the faculty member and the student.

One, two, or three credit hours may be awarded for an independent study project, provided no student may receive academic credit for more than three credit hours total for all independent studies undertaken during the student's Law School career. The faculty member and student must determine the credit hours to be awarded before the project begins and may not thereafter either increase or decrease the credit hours. As a general rule, each hour of credit requires no fewer than ten pages of substantive writing.

Grading for independent study projects should be in accordance with general Law School standards.

5. New Course Proposals

Faculty members may propose new courses for the next academic year by January 15th of each year. The proposal should be submitted on the required form to the Academic Affairs Committee which will act on the proposal prior to February 1. If the committee approves the proposal, it will be presented to the faculty at the February faculty meeting so the course can be included in the schedule for the following academic year. Approval of a new course by the Academic Affairs Committee and the faculty does not mean that the course will necessarily be offered in the coming academic year. The form for new course proposals is found in Appendix A.

6. Academic Advising

First-year small section teachers serve as faculty advisors for students in their small sections throughout the students' Law School career. All faculty members are encouraged to be reasonably accessible to students seeking assistance in course selection and career advice.

The Office of Academic Affairs publishes the *Academic Advising Handbook* (see <https://my.law.unc.edu/academics/advising/handbook.aspx?cid=3>) each spring, which includes relevant academic policies, a brief description of all current course offerings and a listing of graduation requirements. Faculty members are responsible for providing descriptions of the courses to the Academic Affairs Administrative Assistant upon request. When a faculty member seeks approval for a new or substantially revised offering, he or she should include a course description suitable for inclusion in the *Academic Advising Handbook*.

7. Banking Excess Teaching Hours

Tenured and tenure-track faculty members may accumulate or "bank" their excess teaching hours toward future course reduction. Faculty members designated as clinical faculty (including those in the Clinics, the Externship Program, RRWA and the Law Library) are not eligible to participate in the banking system, even if they are tenured or tenure-track. Their teaching responsibilities typically include supervisory and other types of work instead of a course package, and reducing these responsibilities would involve a different kind of cost than course reduction for other faculty members. Changes in the teaching and other responsibilities of clinical faculty members are, therefore, left to the discretion of the Dean.

For purposes of the banking system, the presumptive teaching load for full-time faculty members is a total of ten hours for the fall and spring semesters combined, but not including summer school. Activities undertaken by faculty members other than teaching (such as serving as advisor to a law journal or other student organizations) do not earn hours under the banking system. The Dean retains the authority to consider such undertakings in determining whether to grant a reduced course load.

a. *Excess of teaching hours*

Excess hours will be accumulated when a faculty member teaches (or is presumed to teach, as explained below) more than ten hours during any academic year. A faculty member is entitled to use accumulated excess hours to justify a request for course reduction, allowing the faculty member to teach less than a full-time load. Excess hours not used toward course reduction may be carried forward indefinitely. The examples below are based on the eleven hour full-time teaching load in effect at the time of the banking policy was adopted.