

University of St. Thomas Policies

FACULTY TEACHING EFFECTIVENESS RESPONSIBILITIES

Policy Number: F.07.01

Scope: All Faculty

Purpose: To describe faculty teaching effectiveness responsibilities

POLICY FOUNDATION

Teaching refers to professionally fostering learning through compassionate and compelling experiences that inform and instruct on disciplines or skills by explanation, demonstration, or other means. The commitment of the University of St. Thomas to teaching is framed first by the *Apostolic Constitution of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II on Catholic Universities* (1990), referred to as *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, and the subsequent description of its application to universities in the United States, *The Application for Ex Corde Ecclesiae for the United States* (2000). *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* speaks to the role of teaching. “Every Catholic University, as a university, is an academic community which, in a rigorous and critical fashion, assists in the protection and advancement of human dignity and of a cultural heritage through research, teaching and various services offered to the local, national and international communities.” (See *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* Part 1, A, 1, 12).

The commitment of the University of St. Thomas to teaching is further framed by the Basilian community founded by the First Ten Basilians who came together based on their strong Catholic convictions and to respond to the chronic need for balanced Christian education. As the Basilians describe this conviction, “Our service to God is made real through our teaching and dedication to sharing knowledge.” (See Basilians, Our Way of Life, Teaching: <https://www.basilian.org/our-way-of-life/teaching/>).

The University of St. Thomas gives primacy to teaching effectiveness, making evaluation of the faculty member’s teaching effectiveness of significance for tenure and promotion. Teaching performance must be both appropriate and varied, informed by both the campus-wide criteria and the discipline-specific criteria as they relate to the campus-wide criteria. There are a variety of signs of teaching excellence including: clearly articulating learning objectives, providing evidence-based instruction, presenting subject matter clearly while recognizing its complexity; bringing subject matter, when appropriate, to bear on the present human condition and the university mission; encouraging students to explore, invent, and discover; promoting independent thought and judgment in students, inspiring in students a desire to continue studying and learning; and challenging them to grow beyond their present capacities; and, when appropriate, relating subject matter to human values, issues of peace and justice, and other dimensions of the human condition.

POLICY STATEMENTS

1. Teaching

- a. Teaching is the first and primary responsibility of University of St. Thomas faculty and a significant portion of the faculty workload.

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- b. The University does not prescribe methodologies; teaching methods are personal, varying with individuals. The University does prescribe the modality and other administrative aspects of teaching. The University catalog publishes the official description of each course offered. Faculty members are obliged to teach what is stated in this description. They are also obliged to provide a course syllabus with course content consistent with this catalog description.
- c. Academic mentoring is an integral component of faculty teaching responsibility and is managed at the department and/or school level. It collaborates with academic advising to create the optimum student outcome.

2. Teaching Expectations

- a. Teaching load policies may be established at the school level and finally approved or altered by the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Teaching loads vary based on the contractual content of each faculty member.
- b. Every faculty member must prepare a syllabus for each course that he/she teaches consistent with the departmental or school format for syllabi. The syllabus must be distributed to students during the first full week of classes and updated as needed.
- c. All classes are scheduled by the Registrar.
- d. To improve teaching and to provide information for decisions on teaching effectiveness, the University is committed to the systematic evaluation of faculty by students. An evaluation instrument will be recommended by the Faculty Evaluation Committee to the Vice President for Academic Affairs for review. Any evaluation tool is subject to approval by the President.
- e. Faculty members must submit grades according to the established schedule.

APPROVED: Board of Directors

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