

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### About This Brief

#### *In This Brief*

This research brief will focus on teaching and, in that context, explore faculty work at UT System institutions. Faculty have multiple roles and responsibilities — they teach, engage in scholarship/research, and provide public service. The brief will answer questions about how much time faculty members spend on instruction and instruction-related activities and about who is teaching undergraduate students and the lower-division courses which are critical to student engagement. Using data from the National Survey of Student Engagement, this brief provides evidence to the multiple interactions students have with faculty both inside and outside the classroom.

### Exploring Faculty Workload

The five things you need to know about UT System faculty:

1. *Up to 39 hours of instruction alone.* Estimated faculty time spent on instruction and instruction-related activities range from 29 to 39 clock hours per week. This does not include hours spent on scholarship/research.
2. *Faculty exceed the standards* for teaching loads set by the UT System Board of Regents.
3. *Faculty demonstrate a strong commitment to classroom teaching.* T/TT faculty produce a high—and, in many cases, the highest—proportion of undergraduate semester credit hours. Teaching assistants do the smallest share of teaching, ranging from 4% to 11% of undergraduate credit hours taught. These teaching assistants are advanced Ph.D. students.
4. *Quality instruction at the lower division level.* T/TT faculty members teach freshmen/sophomore level courses.
5. *Students rate institutions and faculty members highly.* Of UT System seniors responding to the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), more than 80% rate their educational experience as good to excellent and three-quarters rate the quality of relationships with faculty members as above average.
  - Evaluations of faculty teaching quality involve both student and peer assessment.
  - Teaching evaluations are part of faculty annual reviews for promotion and tenure.

### Conclusions

*Committed to Teaching.* There is evidence of a strong commitment to teaching by tenured and tenure-track faculty, including undergraduate classes. Teaching load credits are increasing. Only a small percentage of semester credit hours are taught by teaching assistants who are advanced Ph.D. students.

*Exceeding Standards.* All UT System institutions are exceeding Board of Regents' teaching load requirements of at least 27 clock hours per week on instruction and instruction related activities alone or the equivalent of 3 organized classes per semester.

#### *Demonstrating Quality in the Classroom.*

- Highly-qualified tenured/tenure-track faculty members are teaching undergraduates;
- Faculty are rated positively by their students; and
- Students rate their entire educational experience highly.

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