Faculty Workload Guidelines:
College of Information Studies, Maryland’s iSchool

This document addresses the workload commitments of faculty members in the iSchool. It starts by providing some definitions (section I). It then provides a brief description of the University System of Maryland’s faculty workload policy (section II). Section III outlines the scope that defines the limits of the guidelines that are presented in section IV.

I. Definitions of key terms

**iSchool** – is synonymous with the College of Information Studies, Maryland’s iSchool.

**Faculty or faculty member of the iSchool** – within the context of this document “faculty” member refers to any person who has a tenure home in or who holds a 50% or more position in the iSchool and who is approved by the iSchool’s APT Committee to teach. This includes the positions described in the University’s Faculty handbook (e.g., tenured and tenure-track professors, professors of the practice, visiting professors, clinical professors, lecturers and senior lecturers, etc.)

**Tenure clock** – the time at which a tenure-track faculty member’s performance will start to be counted towards review for contract renewal in the third year of appointment and then for tenure and promotion review in the sixth year of appointment.

**Tenure-track faculty** – a faculty member appointed as an assistant professor who will be reviewed for contract renewal and for tenure or an associate professor who is initially appointed without tenure and who will be considered for tenure on a date specified in their contract.

**Tenured faculty** – a faculty member who has been granted tenure at the University of Maryland.

**Non-tenured/instructional faculty** – any faculty member who does not hold a tenure-track, tenured or a research position in the iSchool, and who has been appointed on a 50% or more contractual appointment and approved to teach in the iSchool.

**Instructional load** – the number of 3-credit courses that a faculty member teaches, which is often expressed as a 2:2, meaning that the faculty member teaches two 3-credit courses during the fall and spring semesters. Mentoring, advising, course preparation, grading, etc. are all part of instructional load.

**Research/scholarship** – activities that contribute to the development of new knowledge, including publication, sponsored research, presentations, etc.

**Service** – there are two types. Professional service is the service contributed to the profession. University service is the service contributed to the iSchool and the University of Maryland.
Specialization – an identifiable part of an academic program that has a prescribed or suggested set of courses.

Workload – the combined teaching, research and service that a faculty member undertakes during the fall and spring semesters.

II. Overview of the University System of Maryland (USM) Faculty Workload Policy

The full University System of Maryland (USM) II-1.25-Policy on Faculty Workload and Responsibilities (Approved by the Board of Regents, August 19, 1994; Amended by the Board of Regents, July 9, 1999) can be found at:
www.usmd.edu/regents/bylaws/SectionII/II125.html

The USM policy “reflects the centrality of instruction at degree-granting institutions while acknowledging the essential development of knowledge through research/scholarship and its application to societal needs.”

The following description outlines the key points in the USM policy. It describes the overall workload in terms of the percentage of time/effort spent on different types of activities by faculty members at Research Universities within the USM: Instruction: 45-55%; Research/Scholarship: 35-45%; Service: 5-15%

The USM policy also describes an accounting system in terms of course units: www.usmd.edu/regents/bylaws/SectionII/II125.html that broadly translates into an instructional load of five and a half 3-credit courses per year. The current instructional workload in the iSchool as of August 2012 is four 3-credit courses per year, typically two each in the fall and spring semesters (i.e., 2:2, or sometimes 3:1). The rest of the workload is made up of other instructional duties as needed (e.g., mentoring, advising, curriculum development, chairing specializations etc.); research/scholarship; and university and professional service. In the iSchool service typically involves contributing to or chairing a standing committee or ad hoc committee, and contributing other service as needed. The standard instructional load is modified to take account of service commitments, research buyouts, contractual arrangements, and the type of position held, etc.

Each year every college in the USM reports how the workload obligation of each faculty member has been met; public accountability is mandatory. Codes are provided to describe the activities in which faculty engage. These include a set of codes to explain why a particular person has not met the percentages listed above. Usually this means that a faculty member has had a lower than expected instructional load. The codes used to explain this situation are as follows:

1. Instruction. Exceptions from the standard instructional load may be based upon a number of factors, including class size; development of new courses; modality of instruction, including distance education; level of instruction; discipline; accreditation requirements; etc.

2. Departmental Administration. Assumption of responsibility for the functions of chair, assistant chair,
or program director, or for special departmental projects, may require reduction of expectations for service, research/scholarship or instruction. The magnitude of such reduction shall be dependent on the scope of administrative responsibilities and size of the department.

3. *Externally Funded Research and Service Activities*. Assignment of additional time for research or service activities can be supported by external funds, either research or training grants. In these instances, the accompanying reduction of expectations for service or instruction should mirror the replacement of departmental salary support by externally-funded salary support.

4. *Department-Supported Research*. (Departmental Research). Assignment of additional time for research activities supported by the department and consequent reduction of expectations for service or instruction should be related to the institution's mission.

5. *Department-Supported Service*. Assignment of additional time in areas of service and consequent reduction of expectations for research/scholarship or instruction should be directly related to the duration and the extent of the commitment. For example, individual faculty members may be released from the standard expectation in the areas of research/scholarship or instruction in order to make major professional contributions -- e.g., to work in partnership with the public schools or with business or industry.

III. **Scope defining the limits under which the guidelines operate**

Winter terms and summer terms are not included in this document. Teaching during these periods is voluntary or on a contractual basis and does not affect workload reporting.

Faculty members who have joint appointments in other units shall abide by the arrangements of the other unit for that portion of their appointment. The iSchool portion shall be assessed on a *pro rata* basis according to the percentage of the contract based in the iSchool.

The lowest teaching load for any faculty member with a full-time appointment in the iSchool shall be one 3-credit course in the fall and one 3-credit course in the spring semester (i.e., 1:1). The highest teaching load shall be three 3-credit courses in the fall semester and three 3-credit courses in the spring semester (i.e., 3:3). Exceptions will be rare and will only be granted in unusual circumstances. Exceptions will require approval from the Dean.

Each faculty member’s class schedule shall be agreed with the Associate Dean for Academic Programs.

Any contractual arrangement that is more favorable than that outlined in this document will be honored up to the time that it expires.

Only buyouts from sponsored research may be banked and these must comply with the regulations of the funding authority, ORAA and the iSchool.
The cost of buying out from teaching a 3-credit course is currently equivalent to 15% of salary if paid on research funds. This rate is set by the Dean in consultation with iSchool faculty members and, when appropriate, with the Provost.

Each faculty member shall be responsible for submitting an annual workload plan in consultation with the Associate Dean for Academic Programs. This plan shall include expectations for instructional load, research/scholarship and service. Tenure-track faculty members are advised to discuss their plans with their faculty mentors. Once agreed the faculty member and the Dean or a person designated by the Dean shall sign the plan, which will be filed in the faculty member’s personnel file. This plan shall also be available for review by the Associate Dean for Research and as part of the merit pay review. Faculty members who under-perform on research/scholarship and service may be required to increase their instructional load at the request of the Dean.

IV. Guidelines for workload allocation
The aim of these guidelines is to provide a transparent system that recognizes the contributions of each individual. The underlying premise is that all iSchool faculty members contribute meaningfully to the iSchool and that everyone’s contributions are valued and respected.

Four main categories of faculty exist in the iSchool: tenure-track, tenured, instructional and research faculty who may hold a variety of titles (e.g., professor of the practice, visiting professor, lecturer, senior lecturer, etc.). The balance between instruction, research/scholarship, and service varies according to the type of appointment held and may be adjusted to take account of additional service, leadership responsibilities, research, or other exceptional circumstances with permission from the Dean.

1. Tenure-track faculty
   - Newly appointed tenure-track assistant professors will normally teach one 3-credit course per semester (i.e., 1:1) until the end of the first year of their tenure-clock.
   - From year two onwards assistant professors will normally teach three 3-credit courses per year (i.e., 1:2 or 2:1).
   - Typically assistant professors will have completed four different preps for 3-credit classes, or the equivalent before going up for promotion and tenure, including a doctoral level course and a core course for a program, or a specialization or equivalent on one of the Masters programs and they will have served on two or more doctoral student committees by the end of their third year.
   - Assistant professors are expected to engage with students on research and scholarly activities. These include, but are not limited to, supervising Masters theses, doctoral dissertations, individualized research experiences, and independent studies for Masters and doctoral students, as appropriate.
   - Service in Maryland’s iSchool will usually take the form of being a member of a standing committee, or chairing a small committee, or representing the iSchool on a committee outside of the iSchool. Some assistant professors may
serve on more than one committee on some years, e.g., a standing committee and a search committee or a University committee. Every effort will be made to ensure that all assistant professors are treated fairly.

- Research and professional service shall be determined by the faculty member with advice from their mentor, the tenured faculty and the dean.
- Assistant professors can reduce their instructional load to two 3-credit courses per year (i.e., 1:1) by buying out with research funds, or if asked to perform exceptional service, or additional instructional duties. (See below.)

2. **Tenured faculty**
   - Tenured faculty members will typically teach four 3-credit courses per year (2:2)
   - Tenured faculty members will perform research and professional and University service.
   - Tenured faculty members can reduce their instructional load to two 3-credit courses per year (i.e., 1:1) by buying down with research funds or if asked to perform leadership duties, exceptional service, or additional instruction duties. (See below.)
   - Tenured faculty can buy down one or more 3-credit courses with salary rather than research funds for 20% of salary, but only with agreement from the Dean and only to a minimum of two 3-credit courses per year (i.e., 1:1)

3. **Instructional faculty on 9-month contractual appointments**
   - Instructional faculty will typically teach five 3-credit courses per year (3:2 or 2:3).
   - Lower or higher instructional loads may be contractually agreed.
   - Instructional faculty members will perform professional and University service.
   - Instructional loads may be adjusted to take account of research, leadership, administrative and instructional duties. (See below.)

4. **Research faculty on contractual appointments**
   Research faculty will not normally teach but may be approved for teaching.

*Situations leading to reduced instructional loads*
- The Associate Dean for Academic Programs performs high levels of leadership and administrative duties and is not required to teach.
- The Associate Dean for Research will typically teach two 3-credit courses per year (i.e., 1:1)
- Program Directors will typically teach two 3-credit courses per year (i.e., 1:1)
  Administrative support for Program Directors will vary depending on the size of the program. Large programs will have additional administrative support.
- Specializations may have Assistant Directors. Assistant directors may have one 3-credit course reduction per year depending on the amount of work required to direct the specialization. The decision shall be made in consultation with the Dean and the Associate Dean for Academic Programs.