Faculty Teaching Loads in the UNC System

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This paper explores the teaching loads of faculty in the University of North Carolina system. Salaries for faculty members are the single largest cost of higher education in the UNC system, accounting for approximately half of expenditures. The system's funding formula for its 16 college campuses is largely dependent upon the number of instructors needed. Small changes in faculty workloads can mean large budgetary increases or decreases, into the tens of millions of dollars.

The basic goal of this paper is to determine how many courses faculty in the UNC system actually teach on average and to compare that to the official averages claimed by the university system. The official averages seem higher than intuition and familiarity with UNC schools suggest. We also explore the question of whether faculty workloads have changed over time.

Attempting to quantify teaching loads is an exceedingly complex task with many elements. There are different types of schools, different fields of study, different types of teachers—including both full-time and part-time—and different types of teaching units, from regular lectures to the supervision of theses and dissertations. Even teaching units of the same type can have widely varying demands on a professor's time: a "lecture" can have only a handful of students or it can have hundreds. Further clouding the picture is the tendency of some professors to have outside funding that allows them to "buy out" of some teaching duties.

Some questions are best answered qualitatively, such as whether teaching a course in freshman English is equivalent to teaching a graduate course in chemistry in terms of effort required. Still, we must quantify for policy purposes.

The UNC system uses two basic statistics in policy discussions: the average number of courses taught by professors and the average number of student credit hours taught by professors.

Those two numbers are often strongly correlated, although neither gives a complete picture—even together they do not provide all the pieces of the puzzle. Therefore, this paper simplifies the situation by asking only one of the two questions—the one that most people would ask: *How many classes does the average tenured or tenure-track faculty member teach in a semester?* Arriving at the answer (or answers) provides valuable insight.

This paper asks one question: How many classes does the average tenured or tenure-track faculty member teach in a semester?

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Background

This is the second Pope Center report on UNC faculty teaching loads. The first study was conducted in 2011; it was largely in response to a claim by UNC system officials that the average professor taught 3.37 courses per semester. (This number was produced by the Delaware Study, which is used by UNC schools and many others across the country.) The claim seemed to be exceptionally high; since the statistic is used in policy and budgetary matters, we felt best to examine it more closely.

That official UNC figure of 3.37 has now increased to an even more questionable 3.7 courses per semester. It is therefore necessary to take a second look.

Our first attempt deviated from the methodology developed by the University of Delaware. We sought to develop our own common-sense method. Doing so aroused much criticism from UNC system faculty and administrators.

The main difference between our initial method and the Delaware method was that we counted all individual instruction units (which include a wide variety of types including independent study courses, supervised research, and doctoral dissertations) as courses if students received credit for them, while the Delaware Study did not. Another distinction was that the Delaware Study instead counted non-credit courses that met at specific times and places as courses, which we did not.

Yet in that attempt, whether we used our own method or one that was more similar to the one used in the Delaware Study—officially the *Delaware Study of Instructional Costs and Productivity* prepared by the University of Delaware—we found that the average course load for UNC faculty across the system was roughly one less course than the 3.37 figure.

We are now revisiting the issue, this time adhering as closely as possible to the Delaware Study methodology, with the added advantage of a comparison over time.

Methodology

The central question of this paper is how many courses a professor teaches in a semester. The main issues that introduce complexity are the different types of instructional units and the different types of professors. There are at least a dozen different kinds of teaching units in the UNC system, including lectures, laboratories, recitation, independent study, theses, dissertations, field study, and more.

Lectures are the basic unit, and they are easy to count. But professors do more than just give lectures—other instructional units vary widely according to the effort required to teach them. This time around, we chose to deal with that complexity by adhering much closer to Delaware Study standards. They are quite straight-forward: If a teaching unit meets at a regular scheduled time and place, it is counted as a course. Courses with regularly scheduled meeting times and places include almost all lectures, labs, and recitations. Courses in which a student meets individually with a professor at a time and place agreed by them, not mandated by the schedule, are not counted as courses in the Delaware Study.

One procedure we were not able to duplicate was giving professors partial credit if they were able to buy out some or all of their teaching load due to research grants, as that information was not readily available to us. Yet it made little difference. For one thing, such buy-outs are relatively rare in many disciplines, such as the humanities or social sciences. Also, they are rare at all but the major research universities. We contacted the schools to see if professors with light teaching loads were full-time teachers or not—if they were not they were dropped from the sample.

For the sake of additional simplicity, the study was restricted to tenured and tenure-track professors (hereafter described as tenure-track). Other professors—lecturers and adjunct (part-time) professors—are almost entirely hired to teach. There is not likely to be a problem with the teaching loads of adjuncts who are hired on a per-course basis.

Faculty members who hold key administrative positions, such as department chair, dean, or assistant dean, were not counted in the Pope Center study, as their managerial duties often are too time-consuming for them to teach a full load. Also, tenure-track professors with "Research" in their title were excluded. Holders of lesser administrative positions, such as assistant department chair, or director of an academic center, were mostly included as full-time tenure-track professors.

We contacted the department chairs in our sample to make sure we knew the status of professors for the semesters we studied and whether they had duties that excused them from teaching a full load.

A major reason for not including non-tenured faculty in the Pope Center study is because of a major flaw built into the Delaware Study's attempt to quantify the contribution of part-time professors. It defines a full-time equivalent (FTE) professor as any combination of part-time professors whose course loads add up to four. The teaching loads of full-time-equivalent professors are then added to those of full-time professors to arrive at an average workload of the department, school, or system.

This process is circular. If by, definition, the workloads of all adjunct professors will always be converted to an FTE load of four courses, then the workload of one FTE professor will never deviate from four. Doing so will almost always inflate the average course-load of a department or university, as most require less than four courses per professor per semester.

As can be seen in Table 1, every school but one has a higher teaching load for all faculty than for tenure-track—largely due to the procedural flaw in the Delaware Study described above. (Winston-Salem State's sizeable negative difference is also a red flag about the accuracy of its data. Such a thing could only happen if the school were hiring full-time lecturers who only taught a couple of classes—an extremely inefficient practice). Because of its distinctive nature, the UNC School of the Arts is not included in the Delaware Study.

Table 1: Comparing Average Course Loads Between Tenure-Track and All Faculty (Fall 2012)

Campuses	Official DE Study Tenure Courses per Semester	Official DE Study All Faculty Courses per Semester	Difference
NC State	2.1	3.2	1.1
UNC-Chapel Hill	2.5	3.0	0.5
East Carolina	3.1	3.6	0.5
NC A&T	3.1	3.4	0.3
UNC-Charlotte	2.1	2.9	0.8
UNC-Greensboro	4.0	4.2	0.2
Appalachian State	3.3	3.7	0.4
Fayetteville State	3.9	4.0	0.1
NC Central	3.8	4.2	0.4
UNC Pembroke	3.8	3.9	0.1
UNC Wilmington	3.5	3.7	0.2
Western Carolina	2.8	3.1	0.3
Winston-Salem	3.8	3.4	-0.4
UNC-Asheville	4.0	4.3	0.3
Elizabeth City State	4.1	4.4	0.3
UNC System	3.4	3.7	0.3

Source: Delaware Study

Data and Sample

The Pope Center primarily used registration data taken directly from UNC website enrollment systems, which shows such information as the courses offered, their instructors, their times and locations (if they were formally scheduled), and the number enrolled. We also received data from Appalachian State University that had been "groomed" from the "raw" registration data to account for specific considerations.

We created a sample that mirrors the UNC system, based on the individual legislated teaching loads of each school and the proportion of full-time faculty each school has in the entire system. Different types of campuses have

different legislated faculty teaching standards. These standards are statutorily aligned with a university's "Carnegie Classification," which is based upon the degree to which a school focuses on undergraduate education rather than on graduate education and research. The Carnegie classifications and faculty teaching-load standards for schools in the UNC system are listed in Table 2.

Table 2: UNC Carnegie Classifications

Category	Campuses	Legislated Standard Courses per Semester
Research I	NC State	2.0
	UNC-Chapel Hill	2.0
Research II & Doctoral	East Carolina	2.5
	NC A&T	2.5
	UNC-Charlotte	2.5
	UNC-Greensboro	2.5
Master's	Appalachian State	3.0
	Fayetteville State	3.0
	NC Central	3.0
	UNC-Pembroke	3.0
	UNC-Wilmington	3.0
	Western Carolina	3.0
	Winston-Salem	3.0
Baccalaureate I	UNC-Asheville	4.0
Baccalaureate II	Elizabeth City State	4.0

Source: UNC System

Table 3 gives more information about the Pope Center sample. We obtained registration information from seven schools, each representing a Carnegie classification. The number of professors in each sample is given in the third column.

The fourth column tells what percentage of our entire sample came from each school and each department we studied. As you can see from the final column, we attempted to roughly match the percentage of the UNC system faculty represented by that Carnegie classification.

Table 3: Data Sample

Carnegie Classification	School/ Department	Professors in Sample	Percent of Professors in Sample	Percent of UNC System Faculty in Classification
Research I	**UNC-Chapel Hill**			28.8%
	English	53	17.3%	
	Geology	10	3.3%	
Research II	**UNC-Greensboro**			13.1%
	Nursing	37	12.1%	
	Sociology	12	3.9%	
Doctoral	**UNC-Charlotte**			24.4%
	Civil Engineering	17	5.5%	
	Business	69	22.5%	
Master's (Large)	**Appalachian State**			25.6%
	Economics	14	4.2%	
	History	24	7.8%	
	Biology	21	6.8%	
Master's (Small)	**Fayetteville State**			2.8%
	Education	23	7.5%	
Baccalaureate I	**UNC-Asheville**			1.7%
	Environmental Sciences	7	2.3%	
	Philosophy	2	0.6%	
Baccalaureate II	**Elizabeth City State**			3.6%
	Math and CS	8	2.6%	
	History/ Politics	11	3.6%	

Source: UNC Departmental Websites

Results

Our report provides three views or "snapshots" of teaching load dynamics, illustrated in the next few tables. The first is a comparison of teaching loads between the same sample of departments and schools from the Spring semester of 2011 and the Spring semester in 2013. The two dates have considerable importance; in the 2011 legislative session, the UNC system suffered large budget cuts. Many officials said the cuts would harm the academic mission. The 2011 data are from before the cuts, the 2013 two years later.

The second view is an analysis of the teaching loads for two departments at UNC-Chapel Hill. We conclude from our observations (and from the UNC's system's own funding formula) that workload standards should differentiate among academic disciplines as well as among schools.

The third snapshot describes an unsuccessful attempt to rectify data provided by Appalachian State University's Institutional Research, Assessment, and Planning department with data taken from the school's enrollment information online. ASU is a particularly good representative example: While not a large research institute, it is the largest of the non-research intensive schools, with a substantial graduate school. Plus, its average teaching loads are very close to the system averages. The investigation of ASU's data raises important questions about how data are being handled throughout the system.

Despite the budget cuts that began in the Fall of 2011, faculty members on average teach roughly the same as before.

1. UNC Teaching Loads Over Time

Table 4 shows the results for two semesters, the Spring of 2011 and the Spring of 2013. As can be seen, the difference we found in workloads over a period of two years for the overall system is a mere .07 course per semester. Despite the budget cuts that began in the Fall of 2011, faculty members on average teach about the same as before.

Table 4: A Sample of Workloads in the UNC System Over Time

	Spring 2011			Spring 2013		
	Courses Taught	**Faculty**	**Average Teaching Load**	**Courses Taught**	**Faculty**	**Avarage Teaching Load**
UNC-Chapel Hill						
English	75	51	1.47	94	53	1.77
Geology	21	11	1.91	18	10	1.80
UNC-Greensboro						
Nursing	48	29	1.66	81	37	2.19
Sociology	32	12	2.67	37	12	3.08
UNC-Charlotte						
Civil Engineering	51	19	2.68	54	17	3.18
Business	118	61	1.97	134	69	1.94
Appalachian State						
Economics	39	14	2.79	39	13	3.00
History	76	26	2.92	57	24	2.38
Biology	73	25	2.92	58	21	2.76
Fayetteville State						
Education	69	22	3.14	60	23	2.61
UNC-Asheville						
Environmental Sciences	22	6	3.67	27	7	3.86
Philosophy	4	1	4.00	7	2	3.50
Elizabeth City State						
Math/Computer Science	29	8	3.63	30	8	3.75
History/Political Science	29	8	3.63	45	11	4.09
UNC System Sample	686	293	2.34	741	307	2.41

Source: UNC Registration Websites

And while most departments come close to or exceed their expected average workloads, a few fall well short of their mandated threshold.

Furthermore, there were 14 more tenure-track faculty in non-administrative positions, an increase of 4.7 percent, in the sample departments in the Spring of 2013 than there were in the Spring of 2011—despite almost no change in enrollment.

The UNC system's official averages for tenure-track professors (not shown here) corroborate our findings that there is no significant increase in teaching loads for the same period. In fact, they fell from 3.5 in the Fall of 2010—before the budget cuts—to 3.3 in the Fall of 2012—after the cuts.

Given the large budget cuts that went into effect in the Fall of 2011, this lack of change in average teaching loads over time is a sign that the UNC schools had a cushion between revenues and educational expenditures. Most likely, that is because of longstanding practice in academia to receive funding for additional professors but to leave the positions open or fill them with low-paid graduate students or adjuncts.

2. UNC-Chapel Hill

At UNC-Chapel Hill, faculty in the English and Geology departments teach approximately the same course loads, as seen in Table 5:

Table 5: UNC-Chapel Hill Faculty Workloads (Spring 2013)

Department	Professors	Courses Taught	Average Courses Taught	Fewer Than 2 Courses	More Than 3 Individual Study Students
English & Comparative Literature	53	94	1.8	14	12
Geology	10	18	1.8	3	6

Source: UNC-Chapel Hill Registration Website

The average teaching loads for English and Comparative Literature professors —who are not writing teachers but focus on the study of literature—and for Geology professors for the Spring of 2013 are both 1.8 courses per professor, slightly below the 2.0 benchmark for major research universities set by the state legislature. Roughly the same percentage in both departments (of those who are not exempted by administrative duties) taught only one or no courses.

Geology professors tended to teach more independent study units, however. They taught more than two independent study students 6 out of 10 times, as opposed to 12 out of 53 for the English faculty.

This rough equivalence in the teaching loads between Geology and English is illustrative of a basic inefficiency built into the current standards imposed by the legislature: a failure to differentiate between different academic disciplines. It is especially important to do so at the large research institutions. Geology is an experimental science; one would anticipate less focus on teaching than in the humanities, where the focus is on interpreting text.

Yet the current North Carolina statute governing faculty workloads treats all disciplines at a UNC university the same, differentiating only between institutions and not between departments. This is in spite of the university system's own view of the differences in the amount of work required to teach different subjects. In the UNC system funding formula, English is considered a Category I discipline, which is funded less by the state than Category III, which includes the physical sciences such as Geology. This means that, in the university system's own view, teaching a course in the humanities consumes fewer resources—largely the instructor's time—than does teaching the physical sciences.

There is also a utility argument in favor of scientists teaching less than humanities professors at a major research institution, since humanities and social science

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research is less likely to have immediate tangible repercussions for the rest of society. The UNC system bases many of its arguments for higher funding on its economic value to the state: scientific and technical research is much more likely to have a material or economic benefit to society than other subjects.

3. Appalachian State University

Our investigation into why UNC's official average teaching load was so much higher than the Pope Center's required a look behind the officially published data. Fortunately, a member of the administration at Appalachian State University offered to give an explanation of the Delaware Study so that we could explore the matter and also provided us with additional data.

As suggested previously, ASU provides an excellent representation of the entire system. Its official average of 3.6 courses for the Fall semester of 2011 was just 0.1 away from the system average of 3.5, while its tenure-track average for the same year was 3.2, just 0.2 off the system average of 3.4. And ASU averages seemed too high for an institution with a legislated target of 3.0 courses for all faculty—something else it shares with most other UNC campuses and the system as a whole.

During a discussion with the administrator, it became apparent that a likely place to look for the discrepancy is in the part of the process during which universities make changes to the "raw" data taken from the registrar's website before presenting it to Delaware Study researchers, who then perform the actual calculations. At Appalachian State, this "grooming" of the data is performed jointly by a member of the administration and academic department heads.

Below is a comparison of the results of the Pope Center's (PC) calculations using the groomed data provided by ASU and the raw data taken from the ASU registrar's website, according to strict Delaware Study guidelines. The first three columns show the Pope Center's calculation of the teaching load average in three ASU departments from the groomed data provided by the school. Here, whether a teaching unit counts as a course depends on whether the school assigned it "workload credits."

The next three columns show the Pope Center's calculation of the teaching load average from the raw data on

Table 6. Appalachian State Teaching Loads (Fall 2011: Tenure-Track Only)

Department	Courses: ASU Groomed Data	Faculty: ASU Groomed Data	Average Courses: ASU Groomed Data	Courses: PC Raw Data	Faculty: PC Raw Data	Average Courses: PC Raw Data	Official DE Study Average
Biology	63	22	2.9	71	24	3.0	3.8
Economics	46	15	3.1	44	15	2.9	3.1
History	86	26	3.3	67	26	2.6	2.6
TOTAL	195	63	3.1	180	64	2.8	3.2

Source: Appalachian State University

the registrar's website. In this case, a teaching unit is determined to be a course by whether it has a regularly scheduled meeting time and place (this is the Delaware Study standard).

The last column contains the official Delaware Study figures using groomed data. All data were for the Fall semester of 2011.

As seen below, the official tenure-track average of 3.2 courses was much higher than the Pope Center's 2.8 average for ASU. Particularly out-of-line was the official Delaware Study average for the Biology Department: 3.8 courses. That figure conflicts with both of the averages computed by the Pope Center strictly according to the Delaware Study methods.

Also questionable are the 3.3 courses for the History Department calculated from the groomed data, which conflicts with both the Pope Center raw figure and the official figure, both 2.6.

The Pope Center was able to ascertain the sources of these discrepancies. To start, some courses are improperly categorized in the groomed data as "lectures"—which count as courses in the Delaware Study—rather than as independent study, which do not count as courses. This occurred despite the fact that the courses are properly identified in the raw data on the registrar's site. An ASU official said that the registration software "defaults" to the improper type in some cases. Even so, the grooming process is supposed to remove such improper designations.

This was especially important for the Biology Department. Using the groomed data, this miscategorization pushed the department average for tenure-track professors from 2.9 to 3.8 courses—the same as the official figure.

ASU officials said that this error was corrected in the grooming process by "zeroing" out the mislabeled course in the "workload credits" column in the table provided. Here is a line of data for a section of BIO 5998, which is an independent study thesis preparation class. It is taken from the groomed data with both the wrong type and the workload credits zeroed out:

Professor	Course ID	Type	Credits	Workload Credits	Enrolled	Student Credit Hours
X	BIO-5998-101	Lecture	2	0	1	2

Yet the zeroing out had no effect on the official average. Nor is it consistent for all departments. The History Department's groomed data neglects to zero out 17 properly identified independent study courses (example below). Additionally, these inaccuracies may not be simple human error, since the same staff member grooming the data would be involved with both departments.

Professor	Course ID	Type	Credits	Workload Credits	Enrolled	Student Credit Hours
Y	HIS 5500-101	Independent Study	3	3	1	3

If the failure to zero out the independent study history courses had been carried through to the Delaware Study, the additional 17 courses plus two more that were improperly identified as lectures would incorrectly raise the average teaching load for tenure-track teachers in the History Department from 2.6 to 3.3, as noted in Table 6 above.

Yet in the official Delaware Study results, that does not happen. The History Department has an accurate average teaching load of 2.6 courses. At the same time, the Biology Department's official average is 3.8—clearly not correct according to either source of data, and identical to the average calculated with the courses mislabeled and not zeroed out.

The most likely explanation is that the Delaware Study researchers ignored the "zeroing" process—or never were informed of it—and worked straight from type, allowing

incorrect categorizations in the Biology Department to stand. But that is only a conjecture—only researchers with total access to the system can be sure of the true cause of the problem.

A System-wide Problem

So what does this confusing tangle of measures, figures, and definitions at Appalachian State University mean for the entire system? Whatever the specific means by which faculty teaching loads are overstated, it appears that the cause of the incorrect results is endemic throughout almost the entire system.

The official statistics for much of the system contrast starkly with two other measures: the official legislated standards and the results of the Pope Center study.

First, the chart below shows how, in most cases, the official Delaware Study figures differ considerably from the legislated targets. Particularly egregious is UNC-Greensboro's gap of 1.7 courses per semester higher than the legislated average. Indeed, UNC-Greensboro's DE Study average of 4.2 courses per FTE professor—at a research university—defies credibility. But the difference between the average of the legislated standards (weighed according to the type and size of each school) for the whole system is also an extremely high 1.1. Is it plausible that public universities would demand that professors teach so much more than required by law? Many professors have their teaching duties specified in their contracts. It seems unlikely that their contracts would mandate more than required by the state. If so, there would be howls of protest from the faculty—but there are none.

The results are similar when the official averages are compared to the Pope Center findings calculated from registrars' data—to be expected since the Pope Center averages are relatively close to the legislated standards. Table 8 below shows how some of the schools seem to have greatly inflated averages. While the campus samples might be too small to draw conclusions for individual campuses, the overall sample is consistent in the appearance of inflated workload averages for many of the campuses and for the system as a whole.

Table 7. Teaching Loads (All Faculty): A Consistent Difference Between Legislated and Official

Campus	UNC System Official, Fall 2012 (DE Study)	Legislated	Difference
NC State University	3.2	2.0	1.2
UNC-Chapel Hill	3.0	2.0	1.0
East Carolina	3.6	2.5	1.1
NC A&T	3.4	2.5	0.9
UNC-Charlotte	2.9	2.5	0.4
UNC-Greensboro	4.2	2.5	1.7
Appalachian State	3.7	3.0	0.7
Fayetteville State	4.0	3.0	1.0
NC Central	4.2	3.0	1.2
UNC-Pembroke	3.9	3.0	0.9
UNC-Wilmington	3.7	3.0	0.7
Western Carolina	3.1	3.0	0.1
Winston Salem	3.4	3.0	0.4
UNC-Asheville	4.3	4.0	0.3
Elizabeth City State	4.4	4.0	0.4
UNC System	3.7	2.6	1.1

Source: UNC System

Table 8. Tenure-Track Teaching Loads: A Consistent Difference Between Pope Center and Official

Campus	Official DE Study (Fall 2012)	Pope Center (Spring 2011)	Difference
UNC-Chapel Hill	2.7	1.8	0.9
UNC-Charlotte	2.1	2.0	0.1
UNC-Greensboro	4.1	2.4	1.7
Appalachian State	3.2	2.8*	0.5
Fayetteville State	3.9	2.6	1.3
UNC-Asheville	4.4	3.8	0.6
Elizabeth City State	4.3	4.0	0.3
UNC System	3.4	2.4	1.0

**Fall 2011 Source: UNC System*

Practices and data in the entire system must be examined to see whether problems and inaccuracies exist throughout.

While it may seem that we are comparing apples and oranges by using different semesters in the above chart, average teaching loads don't change much from one semester to the next. In the case of ASU, the Pope Center average for the Fall of 2011 was 2.8, while the average for the Spring semester was 2.7—not enough to alter the conclusions to be drawn from the chart. (Certainly not enough in the case of Greensboro, with its 1.7 difference, and for the 1.1 difference for the system as a whole).

The contrast between the Charlotte and Greensboro campuses also raises credibility concerns. The two schools are quite similar: both are lower-tier research schools in urban areas with large commuter populations. They are similar in size, admissions scores, and graduation rates, tuition and instructional costs: average per student instructional costs for the 2011-12 year were $8,412 for Charlotte and $8,199 for Greensboro.

Does it seem reasonable that tenure-track Greensboro professors would teach twice as much as their Charlotte counterparts: 4.1 courses vs. 2.1 courses? Or that having such a disparity in the number of classes that professors teach, they would have nearly identical instructional costs? Some of that disparity may be explained by the fact that Charlotte professors teach much larger class sections, which they do, but that is not the issue. The 4.1 courses officially taught by tenure-track professors per semester at Greensboro still defy credibility.

Conclusion

Our investigation into faculty workloads reveals some interesting observations. It appears as if the teaching loads of tenure-track professors are inflated considerably—perhaps as much as one entire course per semester. Since the official figures are used for policy and budgeting purposes, there is some incentive to do so, and thus questions of ethics must be raised.

Also, there was no significant change in faculty teaching loads from the time before the large budget cut of 2011 and after. Furthermore, it does not appear that there was a wholesale flight in the system to use more adjuncts for teaching to hold down costs. In fact, it appears as though the number of tenure-track faculty increased despite no increase in enrollment. This observation is corroborated by negligible changes in UNC official figures for both courses taught and student credit hours taught for the period under discussion.

These trends suggest that there was much in the UNC budget that could be cut without affecting faculty workloads. It also raises the question of how much more of the "cushion"—including such non-essential spending as unfilled faculty positions and unproductive staff jobs—is still in existence. One notes that, at UNC-Chapel Hill, Chancellor Carol Folt created as many as five new Title IX compliance officials when it was previously handled by one part-time administrator, without any budgeted increase to pay for the new positions.

Additionally, the Delaware Study's method of converting part-time professors into FTE professors is misleading and offers little real information.

Appalachian State University's process of grooming the data for the Delaware studied showed so many problems that it is hard to figure out what is going on, except for the clear conclusion that its official average is inflated. It is especially puzzling that Delaware Study procedures seem to have been inconsistently applied for different departments by a single staff member responsible for the Delaware Study.

Furthermore, because it appears that many other schools in the system have average teaching loads inflated similarly to Appalachian State's, practices and data in the entire system must be examined to see whether problems and inaccuracies exist throughout.

Finally, the UNC system should differentiate faculty workload standards according to departments as well as institutions. Doing so could save taxpayers tens of millions of dollars without affecting the quality of instruction.

There is a lot—many millions of dollars and many highly paid jobs—riding on the legislature's perception of UNC faculty workloads. It appears that current efforts are insufficient for giving policy makers a clear idea of how much time faculty spend in the classroom. Indeed, the extremely high average claimed by the UNC system, along with evidence uncovered by the Pope Center, suggest that incorrect information about faculty workloads is a widespread and ongoing problem.

There needs to be much greater transparency to ensure that potentially systemic inflation of teaching loads is not occurring. If one independent researcher with limited resources and access to data—as was the case with this report—can find so many problems in a relatively short amount of time, what will a more comprehensive study find?

The Pope Center recommends that the legislature or Board of Governors conduct such a study using independent outside researchers who will take a critical approach to make sure they are not being fed incorrect information.

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