

## CEPP Proposal on Contact Hours Earned for Team-Taught Courses

The Skidmore faculty have long expressed interest in collaborating in the classroom. From the inception of the Liberal Studies curriculum and considerably earlier, faculty have combined their efforts in the classroom to create a dynamic and engaging partnership. No doubt our students have benefitted from these collaborations: the faculty teams have served as role models for group work; the faculty have learned from each other and “upped their games” because of the presence of a colleague(s) in the classroom; the opportunities for integrative learning by the students have been enhanced in a team-taught experience; and the end result has been that the sum has been worth so much more than its constituent parts. Successful team-teaching models have included colleagues within a department or program but also between disciplines, and thus often introduce students to multiple types of evidence and methodologies for assessing and analyzing that evidence and presenting their results.

The current default policy for awarding contact hours for a team-taught course is to split the number of credits the students earn between the two faculty. For example, a team-taught four-credit course awards each of the two faculty two contact hours. Such a policy, while mathematically equitable, does not take into consideration the amount of preparation required of each faculty member nor the contributions each faculty member makes to the course. Team-teaching is not readily ‘divisible’; that is, a truly successful team-taught course demands much more of each faculty member than 50% of the work. From the course’s conception to its delivery, each team member is fully engaged in the entire process, and this proposed policy seeks to acknowledge that work fairly.

If course caps are the guide to the assignment of teaching credit, then for each faculty member to receive full credit for a team-taught course under the current policy, a 100-level course must have 2x28 students, or 56 students; a 200-level course must have 2x22 or 44 students, and a 300-level course must have 2x18 or 36 students.<sup>1</sup> CEPP recommends the following revised policy:

- team-taught courses have the total cap set at 1.25x(cap) rather than 2x(cap) for each of the two faculty to receive the full teaching credit for the course. In other words, if two faculty team-teach a four-credit 100-level course, then an enrollment of 1.25x28 or 35 students will earn each of them the full contact hours; if a 200-level course, then an enrollment of 1.25x26 or 32-33 students (which will decrease to 27-28 when the course cap decreases to 22); and if a 300-level course, then an enrollment of 22-23;
- if the course enrolls fewer than the team-taught caps of 35, 27-28 and 22-23, then each faculty member receives one credit hour less than that earned by the students (so, for a four-credit course, the faculty would each earn three credits).
- note: Scribner Seminars are exempt from this proposal; those courses, team-taught or individually taught, each continue to earn four contact hours per faculty member per Seminar.

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<sup>1</sup> These course caps go into effect either in 2014/5 or 2015/6. The current caps, as of spring 2014, are 35-38 at the 100-level; 29-33 at the 200-level (the CEPP course cap subcommittee proposed for the future a cap of 22, which will be at 26 in the first phase of implementation); and 19-23 at the 300-level.

Travel-study courses present a special case, because the course caps, set by OCSE policy, are 7-10 students per faculty member. Currently, as long as the travel-study portion (whether a stand-alone course or one added to a semester-long course) enrolls, if one faculty member serves as the instructor, he/she receives the full teaching credit of (typically) three to five credits, but if it is team-taught, each faculty member receives only 50% of the teaching credit. Not only does this not acknowledge the amount of preparation and delivery of the course material each faculty member contributes, particularly for the travel-study portion, but it also is illogical and it has the effect of penalizing team-teaching. CEPP recommends the following revised policy:

- as long as the travel-study course enrollment meets the OCSE minimum, the faculty should each receive the full credit for offering the course. If the course attracts enough students for one faculty (7-10) but not for two, then only one faculty member will deliver the course and travel-study portion.

Finally, CEPP recommends that departments and programs, particularly chairs and directors, need to be cognizant of the curricular impact when a faculty member participates in a team-taught course, and must weigh the merits of allocating a colleague to a team-taught course against fulfilling overall departmental and programmatic curricular needs. **Faculty should consult with their chairs and the appropriate program directors to assess the departmental and programmatic impacts of a team-taught course.** Resource constraints preclude the possibility for a department or program to back-fill when a faculty member is allocated to a team-taught course.