Clarification of Charge
As explained by the Provost, who attended our first meeting, our charge is to identify the different kinds of courses and learning experiences at Stetson, across and within schools/programs, and to consider how different kinds of teaching might be weighted in a new calculation of faculty teaching load. The aim is to produce a “metric” of faculty work that can be used in academic planning; that will identify in more nuanced ways the different kinds of work that faculty do (and incorporate these into a new understanding of “load”); that will help us make the best (most efficient) use of existing faculty resources; and that will help us achieve greater equity among faculty. We are asked to consider the different kinds of learning experiences faculty are involved in (or wish to utilize in order to enhance student learning); we will want to include “high-impact” experiences that aren’t currently reflected in analyses of faculty load. We are asked to identify and define these experiences; to determine ideal/target enrollments for different courses/experiences; and finally to assess how each kind of course/experience should be weighted in the calculation of faculty work load. Given the different kinds of work that we do, both across and within disciplines, we can assume that the “blocks” of work that construct faculty member’s work load will not necessarily be the same. But the aim is to construct equitable loads with these blocks or units of measurement.

The unit system that the CAS has adopted (and that the SoM and SoBA are considering) breaks loose from using “seat time” as the unit of measure; the unit aims for a fuller, richer student experience. The current measures of faculty work load that we have use “seat time” as the basic unit of understanding faculty work, but this is insufficiently nuanced.

Some of the learning experiences to incorporate into the new metrics include: seminars; writing-intensive courses; discussion-based (but not writing-intensive) courses; lecture/discussion courses; lecture/lab (or other form of experiential learning); tutorials; individual instruction; small group or ensemble instruction; independent study (reading/research); internship supervision; apprenticeship supervision. Questions for the PWG involve target enrollments for all of these different kinds of experiences, and the weight each should carry in a faculty member’s load.

While these discussions are emerging at various schools nationally, there is no magic formula. There are a few models—among the most detailed is the model produced by The College of New Jersey. (This is now posted on our PWG blog.)

We are encouraged to think creatively, though it is clear that we do not have the resources to reduce faculty teaching load below 3/3. Examples of creative thinking would include calculating load to include in regular load teaching outside the semester (for instance: experiential learning or study away in May); developing a system in which ISYs could be “banked” for a course release in a given two-year period (which would require determining how many ISYs are equivalent to a course).
First Steps
1) Begin to educate ourselves about the issues—what conversations are occurring nationally? What schools have undertaken similar projects—and with what results?
2) Share documents on the blog; read in preparation for meetings.
3) Determine what information we will need—and how we will get it.
4) **Develop a list of kinds of courses/learning experiences that faculty offer at Stetson by January.**

Process Issues
1) While we all bring disciplinary perspectives and expertise, we will need to approach differences within and beyond our WG in a spirit of curiosity, seeking to understand how faculty experience their various kinds of work.
2) Beth Paul and Noel Painter have been granted access to the blog (which is otherwise private and inaccessible to anyone outside the committee), so that they will be familiar with our work and discussions as we proceed.
3) In the interests of transparency and an open, credible process, there is a website being created for all the various Work Groups to keep the University community informed of their progress. The website will provide some mechanisms for feedback from the community as well.

Our next meetings:

Friday, November 13\(^{th}\), 2:30. Location tba
Friday, November 20\(^{th}\), noon. Location tba.