Since the last status update (November 15, 2009), the Curricular Parameters Work Group has been working to identify and describe the different kinds of courses/learning experiences that are offered at Stetson. We prepared an initial draft to share with deans and associate deans; in the conversations we held with the deans/associate deans of each college/school on December 8-9, we sought feedback on these course types, as well as the deans’ thoughts on what the optimal/acceptable target enrollments for these different kinds of courses should be. Provost Paul attended each of these meetings. Dean Ballenger invited the PWG to speak to CAS chairs and program directors about our work; Kimberly Flinthamilton and Cindy Bennington (both chairs) represented the PWG at the December 11th CAS Chairs Meeting.

Next steps:
1) Revise/edit the draft documents on the basis of the discussions with deans (ongoing—to include input from chairs and other faculty)
2) Begin meeting with chairs, program directors, and section leaders in January (grouped by division or other common structures/courses/learning experiences in area)
3) Follow up, as necessary, with the deans (also January)

Contexts/Historical Assumptions about Faculty Teaching Load

1) Course weighting in faculty load has traditionally been figured by student credit hours or student contact hours. While each course requires preparation, contact time, and evaluation of student work, these proportions might vary. Historically, a widespread assumption (nationally) seems to have been that a lecture/discussion course will generally require 2 hours of faculty work for each contact hour. Thus, such courses are thought to require, on average, 9-10 hours of faculty time each week (roughly 25% of a 40-hour work week, which is considerably less than most studies suggest faculty actually work—AAUP averages place the average at 45-55 hours/week). Courses that require intensive evaluation of student work by faculty (for example: composition/writing-intensive) can be capped at fewer students in order to achieve greater equity with other kinds of lecture/discussion courses.

2) Some courses require less preparation and evaluation, but more contact with students. The traditional assumption about such courses is that they require closer to 1 hour of time for every 1 hour with students. Such courses are thus thought to require, on average, 6-7 hours of faculty work—roughly 2/3 of the model for the lecture/discussion course described above.

3) In the Music School, faculty teaching load is calculated as a complex formula that might well include both credit hours (the standard in the SoM is 11) and contact/studio hours (the standard in SoM is 20). In SoM, 5 one-hour private lessons (which includes an hour or two of studio time) are considered the equivalent of one 3-hour lecture/discussion course for purposes of calculating load.

4) The teaching part of faculty load in a 3/3 system is widely considered to be 75% of total faculty work load.