

**SAN JOSE STATE UNIVERSITY  
ONE WASHINGTON SQUARE  
SAN JOSE, CA 95192**

**S12-1, Policy Recommendation, Faculty Office Hours**

**Legislative History: Rescinds S68-6**

At its meeting of March 12, 2012, the Academic Senate approved the following policy recommendation presented by Senator Ng for the Professional Standards Committee.

On December 9, 2024, the Academic Senate approved Amendment A to University Policy S12-1, Faculty Office Hours. President Teniente-Matson signed Amendment A to University Policy S12-1 on December 18, 2024.

**Action by University President:**

Approved by President Qayoumi on 3-21-12

**Policy Recommendation  
Faculty Office Hours**

Replaces: S68-6

Resolved: That the attached policy be implemented; and be it further

Resolved: That S68-6 be rescinded.

Approved: February 27, 2012

Vote: 7-1-0

Present: Karin Brown, Marc d'Alarcao, Paul Kauppila, Joan Merdinger,  
Wendy Ng (chair), Noni Reis, Carol Reade, Tamar Semerjian

Absent: Katherine Minks

**FINANCIAL IMPACT:**

This policy does not have any direct financial impact.

**WORKLOAD:**

This policy adjusts the minimum number of scheduled office hours required, to account for the fact that faculty do a considerable amount of advising and consultation through email and other electronic media. The policy requires that full-time faculty members teaching a normal load schedule a minimum of 2 office hours per week, but allows departments to develop departmental guidelines for office hours that differ from this policy, to best meet the needs of their faculty and students.

#### RATIONALE:

The current Faculty Office Hours Policy S68-6 has been in effect for more than forty years. In the past, contact between students and instructors was limited to in-class time, physical office hours, and phone calls. Today's teaching and learning dynamics have changed dramatically for both students and faculty, with a much greater reliance on electronically mediated methods for communication. Faculty may now spend many hours in "unofficial" office hour time (including evenings and weekends) responding to students' instructional needs. These consultations are frequently held outside of the physical "official" office hours, but nonetheless constitute instructional and advising time.

The goal in updating this policy is to provide greater flexibility to both students and faculty. Modes of student-faculty communication have expanded to include various forms of electronic communication including email, chat, and videoconference. Such technology is effective and expedient in responding to student needs. The Faculty Office Hours Policy is being made more flexible to allow faculty to communicate with students using the entire range of types of communication rather than being overly reliant on scheduled, in-person office hours.

# San Jose State University Faculty Office Hours Policy

## I. Office Hours for Instructional Assignments

- a. Faculty members are expected to be available to their students for instruction-related support. To achieve this availability faculty members are expected to schedule instructional office hours during which they will be available to their students for consultation.
- b. Faculty members who are teaching a full load are expected to hold a minimum of two (2) regularly scheduled office hours per week. The mode in which scheduled office hours are held should provide maximum opportunity for students to engage with the faculty member. For example, faculty teaching online courses may hold all scheduled office hours online, while faculty teaching in person may hold all scheduled office hours split between online and in person.
- c. In addition to regularly scheduled office hours, faculty are expected to meet with students by appointment (in-person or online) at mutually convenient times and within reason. This time is not only restricted to one on one meetings, but can include group forums as well as other modes of interaction and messaging in which student questions are addressed as is reasonable to address trends and student/faculty availability.
- d. For faculty members who are teaching less than a full load, the minimum number of scheduled office hours may be prorated, but the number of scheduled hours will not be less than one hour per week unless the faculty member is not teaching.
- e. Individual departments may develop guidelines on scheduled instructional office hours that differ from this policy. Departmental guidelines should be developed collaboratively and must be approved by a faculty vote in compliance with S17-6: Departmental Voting Rights. The guidelines must include a rationale explaining the reason for divergence from the University policy and must be approved by the appropriate dean.

## II. Office Hours for Non-Instructional Assignments

a. Faculty may be required to have office hours for non-instructional assignments, such as advising, research-related, or service activities. The time(s), mode(s), and number of these office hours may be dictated by departmental, college, or university guidelines or an expectation of faculty assigned time. The details (times/modes/numbers) of these non-instructional office hours should be made available to students as widely as possible.

b. If the office hours are based on departmental guidelines, they must be developed collaboratively and must be approved by a faculty vote in compliance with S17-6: Departmental Voting Rights. The approved guidelines must include a rationale explaining the reason for the policy and must be approved by the appropriate dean.

### III. Professional Expectations

It is important that established office hours be kept and responses to student communications be timely. Faculty members are responsible for these obligations as a part of their academic assignments. Faculty may make changes to scheduled office hours as long as they give maximum possible notice to students, depending on the reason for the change, and reschedule office hours in a timely manner. It should be noted that faculty do a considerable amount of advising and consultation through email and other electronic and analog media.

### IV. Revision of the University Faculty Office Hours Policy

It is in the best interests of students and faculty that the policy be reviewed to make sure that it is effective and workable, particularly in the context of changing educational technologies. Review of this policy should take place no less than every five years by an appropriate Academic Senate committee.