

Adopted: February 8, 2022

**ACADEMIC SENATE
Of
CALIFORNIA POLYTECHNIC STATE UNIVERSITY
San Luis Obispo, CA**

AS-929-22

**RESOLUTION ON REVISIONS TO UNIVERSITY FACULTY PERSONNEL POLICIES
12.2: OFFICE HOURS**

Impact on Existing Policy: The policy enacted by this resolution revises UFPP 12.2 which was enacted by AS-886-20. Further details about its impact on existing policy is described in the attached report. ⁱ

1 WHEREAS, Office hour policies should be flexible to accommodate for varying
2 needs of instructors and differences in the ways faculty interact with
3 students in various instructional settings across the university; and
4

5 WHEREAS, Cal Poly's office hour policy was updated for Fall 2020 including
6 limitations on use of synchronous online office hours for instructors
7 with in-person instructional assignments; and
8

9 WHEREAS, From Spring 2020 through Spring 2021 as Cal Poly conducted most
10 student interaction online, faculty and students became familiar with
11 the use of synchronous online teleconferencing software such as
12 Zoom for conducting office hours; and
13

14 WHEREAS, Consultation in Fall 2021 with all the colleges provided broad support
15 from faculty that Zoom can be an effective means to conduct
16 synchronous online office hours as an alternative to or alongside in-
17 person office hours; and
18

19 WHEREAS, Some provisions of the current office hour policy that are left to
20 colleges, such as office hour requirements for department chairs and
21 heads, have not yet been incorporated into some college personnel
22 policy documents; therefore be it
23

24 RESOLVED: The university office hour policy as contained in the attached report
25 "Revision to UFPP 12.2: Office Hours" be enacted for Fall 2022, and be
26 it further
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28 RESOLVED: Colleges revise chapter 12 of their personnel policy documents by Fall
29 2022 to include the mandated college-level office hour policies as
30 indicated in UFPP 12.2.

Proposed by: Academic Senate Faculty Affairs Committee
Date: January 4, 2022

ⁱ (1) Describe how this resolution impacts existing policy on educational matters that affect the faculty. Examples include curricula, academic personnel policies, and academic standards.
(2) Indicate if this resolution supersedes or rescinds current resolutions.
(3) If there is no impact on existing policy, please indicate NONE.

Revision to UFPP 12.2: Office Hours

Winter 2022

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: Academic Senate Faculty Affairs Committee (FAC) is proposing a modification to university office hour policy that enables synchronous online hours to satisfy office hour obligations.

BACKGROUND: The Academic Senate Faculty Affairs Committee (FAC) is a standing Senate committee with representation from each college, the library and professional consultative services, Academic Affairs, and a student representative. FAC employs a streamlined process for Academic Senate approval of personnel policies including consultation with faculty affected by proposed changes and clear identification of which policy documents have been superseded by a proposed change. Using this process, FAC updates UFPP on an as-needed basis.

In Winter 2020 the Academic Senate updated Cal Poly's office hour policy for the first time since 1983. The new policy was comprehensive and reflected the emerging use of online teleconferencing software as a means of conducting office hours. The new policy tied office hour modalities to instructional modalities and limited faculty to one virtual office hours when their instructional assignment was entirely in-person. By the end of Winter 2020, and ahead of the initial application of the new office hour policy the need to shift to virtual instruction and office hours in response to COVID-19 had taken hold. In Spring 2021 FAC members discussed the limitation of virtual office hours in the new office hours policies in light of the forced need for virtual office hours. These discussions along with feedback from others that we should rethink the limitation on virtual office hours informed the proposed revisions to our university office hour policy.

Summary of revisions to UFPP 12.2: Office Hours

The proposed revision to the university office hour policy focuses on **12.2.10: Mode of office hours**, revising it to align the mode of office hours to the needs of the students served by the office hours, and defining acceptable modes of office hours as in-person or by synchronous online communication such as Zoom.

The revisions also clarify the standard location for in-person office hours as in the faculty member's office. Changes to standard office hour locations, or any rescheduling should be expressed in a timely manner to the students affected by the change. Any further allowances or limitations on the use of another location for office hours would need to be addressed in college or department policies.

All restrictions on synchronous online office hours are removed from the policy. One other revision to 12.2.5 is in the interest of clarity. Everything else in the university office hour policy remains as it was in the version passed by the Senate in Winter 2020, which can be found in the current academic year's version of UFPP on the Academic Personnel website.

Impact on Existing Policy

The revised policy text for UFPP 12.2 supersedes its prior version. All other college and department office hour policies *inconsistent* with the proposed university policy need to be revised to conform with

Revision to UFPP 12.2: Office Hours

Winter 2022

UFPP 12.2. *Any subordinate policy consistent with the minimal provisions of the new office hour policy remain in effect until that faculty unit decides to revise it.*

Implementation

The new office hour policy would go into effect in a timeline set by the Academic Senate and ratified by the President. FAC recommends that it go into effect in Fall 2022.

The implementation of university office hour policies requires colleges to assess their own office hour policies for consistency with the university policy and resolve any inconsistencies in their subordinate policies.

Colleges may impose further restrictions on office hour modality so long as those restrictions are otherwise consistent with UFPP 12.2. For example, imposing a limit on the amount of synchronous virtual office hours is consistent with the allowance of virtual office hours, and thus would be allowed so long as the college implemented the policy by the procedures set out in their personnel policies documents. However, allowing asynchronous online communication to count as office hours (such as counting time engaged in email communication as office hours) would be inconsistent with UFPP 12.2 since 12.2.4 explicitly distinguishes such asynchronous communication from office hours.

College level office hour policies would be in Chapter 12 of the college personnel policy document, and would be subject to approval the same way that any personnel policy is approved as per UFPP 1.5.5 and 1.5.6.

Consultation

FAC and Academic Personnel distributed a draft of the proposed policy to the college deans for them to gather feedback on the revisions from their faculty and college leadership. The policy text proposed here reflects revisions based on that consultation.

What follows is the proposed policy text in a clean form, and also in a version that reveals its revision history. Existing policy can be found in the current academic year's version of UFPP, on the Academic Personnel website.

12.2. Office Hours

- 12.2.1. Policy in 12.2 established by AS-886-20. This policy supersedes the previous university policy on office hours originally in CAM 370.2.
- 12.2.2. Cal Poly's Educational Mission: "Cal Poly is committed to excellence in teaching and learning. In all disciplines, we seek to provide a student-centered, learner-focused education, facilitated by a low student-teacher ratio in classes conducted primarily by full-time, regular faculty. The cornerstone of our educational philosophy is our commitment to Learn by Doing whereby classroom instruction is complemented by practical, hands-on learning in the laboratory, the studio, and the field." (Cal Poly Catalog)
- 12.2.3. Each faculty member must schedule and conduct office hours each week for consultation with students. One-on-one, direct, personal engagement between students and their instructors and faculty advisors in regularly scheduled office hours is a vital means of contributing to the student-centered mission of Cal Poly.
- 12.2.4. Asynchronous communication (e.g. email) with students and ad hoc appointments to meet with students are expected normal instructional duties distinct from scheduled office hours.
- 12.2.5. An office hour is one credit hour (i.e. 50 minutes) of regularly scheduled time for faculty to be available to meet on regularly scheduled days and times.
- 12.2.6. Faculty with instructional assignments shall hold scheduled office hours scaled to their instructional assignments. Scheduled office hours should be held during the days and times when classes are normally scheduled, distributed across days and at times suited to the needs of students. During final exam week office hours may be rescheduled as necessary, and should be suited to the needs of the students served in the instructional assignment.
- 12.2.7. Colleges that assign duties warranting the holding of office hours shall include office hour policies in their personnel policies documents.

12.2.8. Scheduled instructional office hours

- 12.2.8.1. Minimum weekly office hour scheduling shall be scaled to instructional assignments as follows:

<i>Instructional WTU</i>	Lecturer	Tenure-Line
<i>> 0 up to and including 4</i>	1 office hour	2 office hours
<i>> 4 up to and including 8</i>	2 office hours	3 office hours
<i>> 8 up to and including 12</i>	3 office hours	4 office hours
<i>> 12</i>	4 office hours	

- 12.2.8.2. Faculty receiving assigned time for teaching large format classes shall schedule office hours according to the total WTU for the instructional assignment and assigned time related to that course.
- 12.2.8.3. Tenure-line faculty whose instructional assignments have been reduced to zero WTU but who are involved in research or other projects involving supervision of students shall hold a minimum of one regularly scheduled in-person office hour.
- 12.2.8.4. If colleges or departments have any further provisions about the scheduling of office hours, those provisions shall be defined in their personnel policy document.

12.2.9. Scheduled advising office hours

- 12.2.9.1. Assigned time for advising duties may have an amount of office hours defined as part of the advising function. Any advising office hours attached to assigned time shall be determined by the instructional unit that issues the assigned time and specified in the assignment. Office hours for advising duties earning assigned time contribute to the total office hour obligation of the faculty member.
- 12.2.9.2. Department chair and head responsibilities shall include the requirements for the scheduling of advising office hours required for their assignment. Colleges shall determine the minimum office hours required for department chairs and heads.

12.2.10. Mode of office hours

- 12.2.10.1. The mode of scheduled office hours should meet the needs of students for the instructional or advising function that requires the scheduling of the office hours.
- 12.2.10.2. Acceptable modes of holding scheduled office hours include office hours held in-person or held synchronously online using technology readily available to the campus community and generally available to the students served by the office hours (e.g. Zoom).
- 12.2.10.3. Scheduled office hours held in-person should be in the faculty member's office or some other definite and regular location.
- 12.2.10.4. Colleges and departments shall specify in their office hour policies any general allowances or requirements for alternate locations or synchronous online modes of conducting office hours.

12.2.11. Notification

- 12.2.11.1. Office hours shall be posted by the beginning of the second week of instruction in faculty listings on department websites. Colleges and instructional units can determine additional ways for posting office hours that conspicuously and conveniently inform the university community of when and where office hours shall be conducted, such as common boards at department offices, on placards near faculty offices, or other online directories.
- 12.2.11.2. If the university adopts a standard online directory generally accessible to the university community that is capable of presenting faculty schedules, then office hours should be posted in such an online directory.
- 12.2.11.3. Faculty should notify enrolled students and department administrators and administrative support staff of any need to cancel, reschedule, or relocate office hours in a timely manner appropriate to the needs of the students served by those office hours.

12.2.12. Exceptions

- 12.2.12.1. Exceptions to the policies about the scheduling of instructional and advising office hours should coordinate the needs of the instructor and the students given the nature of the instructional or advising assignment.
- 12.2.12.2. Exceptions require department chair/head and college dean approval.
- 12.2.12.3. Exceptions should be temporary and specific.
- 12.2.12.4. Exceptions that extend beyond a specific instructor's temporary needs should be treated as a basis for revisiting the college or department office hour policies.

- 12.2.12.5. Colleges and departments with standing needs that deviate from university policy should treat those needs as a basis for asking the Academic Senate Faculty Affairs Committee to revisit university level office hour policies.



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

MEMORANDUM

To: Thomas Gutierrez
Chair, Academic Senate

Date: February 15, 2022

From: Jeffrey D. Armstrong
President

Copies: Ken Brown
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Jeffrey D. Armstrong

Subject: Response to AS-929-22 Resolution on Revisions to University Faculty Personnel Policies 12.2: Office Hours

By way of this memo, I acknowledge and approve the above-entitled Academic Senate resolution. Colleges as well as the library are encouraged to revise their personnel policy documents to include clarity of the discretionary university policy considerations and align with Subchapter 12.2 of the University Faculty Personnel Policies (UFPP) as outlined in this resolution and supporting documentation.

Please express my appreciation to the Academic Senate members and the Academic Senate Faculty Affairs Committee for their attention to this important matter.