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Zurich, 17 September 2024

Fact Sheet on Including Cross-Faculty Teaching in UZH Professors' Assigned Teaching Load

Professors' teaching duties are governed as follows by §42 of the University of Zurich's employment ordinance:

[2] As a rule, teaching obligations cover:
a. 6–10 semester hours for full professors;
b. 4–6 semester hours for associate professors;
c. 2–4 semester hours for assistant professors and SNSF professors.
[3] The Executive Board of the University may approve exceptions in justified cases.

More specific details are set forth as needed in a professor's professorial appointment order.

Governing legal provisions do not specify what is to be included in professors' assigned teaching load. It has long been standard practice, however, for teaching at the university to take place predominantly within the traditional disciplines. While these will continue to form the core of UZH's academic program, complementary interdisciplinary, transdisciplinary, cross-faculty and international study programs are becoming increasingly important at UZH as well. This development can be seen not only within higher education in Europe but also within the context of major global challenges (such as climate change, digital transformation, advancements in artificial intelligence, the growing risk of pandemics and questions of social justice). Indeed, students and instructors – as well as society and the political arena – rightfully expect such overarching issues to be addressed not only by research but also through teaching at universities.

The Executive Board of the University held an extraordinary meeting on 9 April 2024 in which deans and vice deans of studies discussed and agreed upon measures aimed at facilitating cross-faculty and cross-disciplinary study. One of these measures is to reduce restrictions on counting professors' teaching activities in cross-faculty and interdisciplinary study programs towards their assigned teaching load.

In view of this, the Executive Board of the University has determined that professors and other instructors are to manage their assigned teaching load as follows:

- As their first priority, teaching within a discipline and teaching compulsory modules and core elective modules within this discipline
- As a second priority, a reasonable amount of teaching in cross-faculty study programs and modules, such as those offered by the School of Transdisciplinary Studies or within UZH's strategic alliance Una Europa
- As a third priority, teaching courses offered as elective modules

The first point of contact for questions and clarification on this topic is the vice dean of studies at the relevant faculty.