

Faculty rights and responsibilities

Preamble

All appointments to the Columbia University Department of Epidemiology are based on faculty excellence, at the appropriate academic level, as guided by the Columbia University Faculty Handbook and the department's Guidelines for Appointments and Promotions.

We are a research-intensive department and all our faculty have active programs of science and scholarship. We also have an extensive educational portfolio and are deeply committed to training a diverse body of students who will be leaders in population health science and public health practice.

The department has a long history of pioneering epidemiologic leadership, with many of its faculty having epidemiology as their mother discipline, although we also highly value our interdisciplinary diversity proffered by our many faculty who have been rigorously trained in epidemiology and who have demonstrated their use of epidemiologic methods, yet whose mother discipline may not be epidemiology per se. This diversity is one of our core strengths, allowing us to engage faculty with a broad range of expertise and who bring to the department a variety of experiences that well serve the collective vision for our science, education, and impact.

We consider all faculty appointed in epidemiology, whether full-time, part-time, interdisciplinary, joint, adjunct, or other, to be key to the functioning of the department. It is critical that we recognize and respect the differential value commitment faculty make in their engagements with the department. This document aims to clarify the roles of all faculty appointed in epidemiology, to ensure that we optimize both individual faculty engagement and collective departmental function.

Rights of Department of Epidemiology Faculty

- All faculty are members of one or more of the department's scientific units, and thus have access to a substantial intellectual infrastructure and ample opportunity for collaboration and consultation with peers who work in their scientific unit(s) of interest.
- All faculty are considered part of the department's intellectual community. As such all faculty are invited to all department events including faculty meetings, department seminars, grand rounds, symposia and other special lectures and events.
- All full time junior faculty are engaged in our structured mentoring program. Upon joining the department junior faculty are assigned a mentor who consults with them on career development and who contributes a separate assessment as part of the annual faculty review process. Junior faculty primarily appointed in epidemiology receive a formal fourth year review in which a committee of senior faculty members conducts a comprehensive and thoughtful evaluation of their scholarly development and meets with them to provides specific and pragmatic advice to optimize their career and potential for promotion.
- All faculty have access to the department chair, vice chairs, senior staff, program directors, scientific unit leaders, and other senior faculty for guidance and support around issues ranging from research directions to administrative challenges and beyond.

This document represents the Department of Epidemiology's Faculty Rights and Responsibilities and does not supplant or contradict any Faculty Rights and Responsibilities issued by the Mailman School of Public Health.

- Full time faculty who are administratively housed in the department are expected to teach at least one 3-credit course annually. Faculty in this group with active research portfolios who can cover 95% of their salary on grants, may, in consultation with the chair, opt out of teaching to accommodate their grant-funded responsibilities. However, no faculty member may have more than 95% of their salary funded by research grants.

Contribution to teaching mission

- All faculty are expected to take on student mentoring responsibilities. In general we expect that all faculty mentor 3 or more students annually (master's or doctoral), although this can be averaged out over time. The general expectation is that senior faculty will mentor more students than junior faculty. Specific ways faculty can mentor students include participating on doctoral dissertations, being a master's thesis reader, supervising a master's student practicum placement.
- All faculty are expected to advise master's students as needed. It is understood that faculty who are housed in the department may be called upon to advise students more than other faculty. Therefore it is also understood that advising students can offset some of the mentoring expectations noted above.
- All faculty are expected to be responsive to our students, engaging with them as needed, participating in events relevant to student life, and to the extent possible, creating opportunities for students to participate in faculty-led research. We aspire to prepare students to be leaders in public health and expect that all faculty commit to helping our students to that end.
- Full time faculty who are administratively housed in the department are expected to teach at least one 3-credit course annually. Faculty in this group with active research portfolios who can cover 95% of their salary on grants, may, in consultation with the chair, opt out of teaching to accommodate their grant-funded responsibilities. However, no faculty member may have more than 95% of their salary funded by research grants.
- All other faculty are encouraged to likewise take on the teaching of courses, but are not required to do so. Faculty who are not administratively in the department may offset mentoring responsibilities described above by engaging as a formal instructor in a course. Details about compensation for faculty teaching are provided in the next section.
- Faculty who seek to opt out of a single semester of teaching may be considered to do so by the Department Chair if they: give at least one full semester advance notice (and one year advance notice if it is a required course), have a viable plan for teaching coverage of their course especially if it is a required degree program or certificate course, use the time away from teaching to engage in additional research activities that would not have otherwise been feasible and submit extramural grant applications as PI/MPI, can cover 95% of their salary on grants or other non-teaching sources of funding, and use their research grant or discretionary funds, and not departmental central funds, to cover the teaching effort they are opting out of for the semester. Faculty wishing to be considered for this should submit a short proposal for Department Chair approval detailing the aforementioned points, a general justification as to why they need teaching relief to accomplish those research activities, and the additional research activities that would not have otherwise been feasible because of their teaching duties (for instance, the need to travel for an extended period of time, perhaps outside the country, in building a new research partnership, engaging in formative collaboration activities that will ultimately lead to a major grant submission or new program of research, etc.)
- While faculty welcome letters, cards and other written expressions of appreciation, faculty of the Department of Epidemiology may not accept gifts of value (above \$20).

- All faculty have a Columbia email account and access to Columbia libraries, digital resources, and other information technologies as they become available.
- Administrative support for grant submission and management is provided to all faculty who submit grants through the department.
- Physical space is offered to all full time faculty who are administratively housed in the department and may be offered to other faculty who take on substantial departmental engagement that warrants physical presence in the department.

Responsibilities of Department of Epidemiology Faculty

Engagement in intellectual life

- All faculty are expected to engage in the intellectual life of the department through attendance at department events including faculty meetings, department seminars, grand rounds, symposia and other special lectures and events, and through participation in the activities of their scientific unit.
- All faculty are expected to engage in scholarship, education, or translation that is consistent with the department's strategic direction. For joint, interdisciplinary, or adjunct faculty, this work can be conducted either in collaboration with faculty in the department or at their home department or institution.
- All faculty are expected to contribute to the activities that constitute the department's operational success. As such, in consultation with the department chair or designate, all faculty participate in committee work or other equivalent activity that is core to department citizenship.
- It is expected that all faculty, as members of a leading epidemiology department, contribute to the discipline at large through broader citizenship activities, including participating in relevant disciplinary meetings, engaging in disciplinary journals in review and editorial capacities, engagement with colleagues in public health practice, and contributing to the broader epidemiology conversation at relevant venues. Broader citizenship will also include, where appropriate, community-level contributions to broader epidemiologic and public health activities.

Contribution to research mission

- All faculty recognize that we are a research-intensive department and all our faculty, at some level, necessarily have active programs of science and scholarship. All faculty will also recognize that research contributions can emerge in many forms, ranging from active leadership of extramurally funded science to mentorship and training of junior scientists.
- Wherever possible, faculty are expected to pursue extramurally funded research funding that supports full indirect cost recoveries for the department. Approval by the chair will be required when full indirect cost recovery is not possible for extramurally funded research projects.
- Where possible, faculty research should be replicable to outside individuals and scientific findings from faculty research, once published, may be promoted by the department under consultation with the faculty member or members who led the research in question.
- As part of the effort to maximize scientific opportunities for junior faculty success, senior faculty are expected to participate in mentoring junior faculty, both formally, through our structured mentoring program, and informally.

Annual review

All faculty are expected to participate in the department's annual faculty review, conducted at least once each calendar year.

Epidemiology Department Policy on AI Use in Epidemiology Courses

Generative AI tools are increasingly present in academic and professional settings. Generative (vs. traditional) AI harvests intensive computational power and data for training to create new content (vs. e.g., using an algorithm to make a prediction). Commonly used generative AI tools include OpenAI ChatGPT, Microsoft CoPilot, and Claude by Anthropic. The Epidemiology Department's policy on AI use is intended to ensure that the use of AI supports rather than undermines learning, critical thinking, and academic integrity.

The Epidemiology Department strongly discourages instructors from allowing generative AI tools to substitute for substantive intellectual work in academic courses, including for generating ideas, analyses, interpretations, or de novo written content. Uses the department does not consider substantive include formatting, citation management, code debugging, creating figures or graphics based on student-provided specifications, or targeted search support. Faculty instructors have discretion over permitted uses and may also assign students to use AI tools for specific academic tasks. Instructors must include language in their syllabi specifying permitted and prohibited uses of AI, including as it pertains to individual assignments.

Students must disclose their permitted use of generative AI (including the specific tool, version, and prompt(s), as appropriate), and students are fully responsible for the accuracy, originality, and integrity of all submitted work. Unauthorized or undisclosed use of generative AI constitutes a violation of the university's academic integrity policy. Faculty are expected to report suspected cases of unauthorized use of AI tools to CSSI (<https://cssi.columbia.edu/content/academic-violations>). If a violation is confirmed, the student should, at a minimum, be awarded a "0" on the relevant assignment.

Suggested template language for faculty to adapt and include in their course syllabi:

The use of generative AI for class assignments is not permitted [other than for...], [unless indicated specifically]. Students who use AI as permitted must include the following statement with their assignment(s): "I acknowledge the use of [generative AI tool name and version] in the preparation of this work. [generative AI tool name] was used for the following permitted purposes: [insert brief description]. I take full responsibility for the accuracy, originality, and integrity of all content generated."

Suspected unauthorized or undisclosed use of AI will result in a report for a suspected academic integrity violation to the CU Center for Student Success and Intervention (CSSI). If a violation is confirmed, the student will be awarded a "0" on the relevant assignment, per the policy of the Epidemiology Department. If you have any questions, please reach out to the instructor in advance.

Compensation Model

Rationale

We aim for a clear, fair, and sustainable compensation model for teaching and for undertaking leadership responsibilities. We also are committed to consistency and transparency in all of our operations and policies.

Intent

The compensation levels articulated here build on the culture of the epidemiology department as a research-intensive department with the vast majority of faculty being primarily funded through extramural projects. Therefore, these compensation levels are intended to formalize transparency of our commitment to faculty but do not mean to shift our departmental culture away from research. With few exceptions it is anticipated that faculty who are administratively and academically primarily appointed in the department will not be spending more than 50% of their time on teaching or leadership responsibilities.

All faculty are expected to work to cover their salary through grant funds. However, no full time faculty member at MSPH may have more than 95% of their salary covered by grant funds. The department of epidemiology will therefore provide 5% salary support for all faculty who are administratively housed in the department, in addition to any other compensation due for teaching or playing a leadership role. For faculty who are administratively housed in other departments, centers, or institutes, the expectation is that their home administrative entity will cover this 5%.

Mentoring of students and engagement in department functioning is not compensated separately, being considered a core element of department citizenship.

Part of the intent of this compensation schema is to ensure a sustainable model for department financing. It is expected that all faculty will cover their full salary through a combination of research, engagement in education, and leadership responsibilities. Departmental deficits may occasion the need for the department to rethink particular faculty departmental engagement and some of these norms.

FACULTY APPOINTMENT	3 CREDIT COURSES	1.5 CREDIT COURSES- SOLE INSTRUCTION/ 3.0 CREDIT COURSES- CO-INSTRUCTION	NOT-FOR-CREDIT COURSES	LEADERSHIP RESPONSIBILITY
Academically and administratively housed in Epidemiology	20% salary coverage	10% salary coverage	40 hrs, \$7000 20 hrs, \$3500 10 hrs, \$1750	5-20% salary coverage
Primary academic appointment in Epidemiology; administratively housed elsewhere at CU *	7.5-15% salary coverage or \$15,000 in add comp	7.5% salary coverage or \$7,500 in add comp		5-15% salary coverage or \$5,000-\$15,000 in add comp
Joint or interdisciplinary in Epidemiology; administratively housed elsewhere	5-10% salary coverage or \$12,000 in add comp	5% salary coverage or \$6,000 in add comp		5-10% salary coverage or \$5,000-10,000 in add comp
Adjunct	\$12,000	\$6,000		\$5,000-10,000

*If faculty member's administrative appointment elsewhere at CU transfers at least 10% of the faculty's total indirect cost recovery to the Department, the top row percentage may be used.

Details

For faculty who are administratively housed in the department, compensation for teaching or exceptional leadership will be solely in the form of salary coverage. We will not compensate faculty who are administratively housed in the department with add comp for teaching, seeing teaching as a core collective responsibility that is part of our shared time commitment.

Range of salary coverage for courses reflects differences in whether courses are required for, or a core part of, the department's formal educational programs. Courses that are required or particularly high-demand will be compensated at the maximum amount of any particular scale in the above table. Other courses will be considered on a sliding scale, taking into account a variety of factors including centrality of the course to the department's vision and educational mission, and course enrollment.

Differential salary coverage by faculty appointment type reflects the department's different responsibility to faculty who are primarily appointed in epidemiology vs. faculty who are not. The scale here aims to reflect the reality that faculty with different departmental engagement also contribute differently to the department (e.g., through grant getting).

Where salary coverage is provided to faculty who are administratively housed elsewhere, given that the department has no control over salaries set by other departments or Institutions, this coverage will be pegged to the average salary of faculty in the same academic level who are administratively housed in the department.

All add comps are pegged to a base salary of \$120,000. While recognizing that this is lower than most faculty salaries, this aims to encourage resource use toward salary coverage rather than add comp, where feasible, seeing teaching as a core engagement of faculty time rather than 'additional' engagement.

Faculty who are administratively housed in epidemiology and are 100% funded for at least a three-year period may wish to divert some departmental support for other purposes via a discretionary account. This can be done, at the equivalent of up to 50% of the relevant faculty-coverage funds over the 100% (e.g., 50% of 20% coverage over 100%), in consultation with the chair and the Department Administrator. In line with the culture of the epidemiology department as a research-intensive department with the vast majority of faculty being primarily funded through extramural projects and the requirement that full-time faculty who are administratively housed in the department are expected to teach at least one 3-credit course annually, only faculty who have a minimum of 75% extramurally sponsored research project funding with full indirect cost recovery and are teaching at least one 3-credit course will be permitted to divert funds to their discretionary account. No more than 15% per year may be diverted to any one faculty member's discretionary account. Faculty who are not 100% funded in any given year will be required to use their accumulated discretionary account funds, should such funds exist, in filling this deficit.

Reflecting the additional administrative load, sole faculty instructors of large (>100 students) required departmental courses are eligible to receive up to \$7,500 in effort coverage or, if they are fully covered, additional discretionary account contributions of the same amount. Other arrangements are also possible, all subject to Mailman School policies regarding salaries and discretionary accounts.

Choosing courses, appointing instructors

Given our responsibility to ensure full salary support for faculty who are administratively housed in the department, those faculty will be given priority by the chair for course teaching. Faculty whose primary academic appointment is in the department but who are administratively housed elsewhere will have next priority.

Compensation is linked to teaching in courses that are listed primarily in epidemiology, and that are determined by the chair, in consultation with the chair's leadership group, to be in keeping with department strategic direction. The school compensates teaching in school-wide courses at levels set by the school.

The chair, in consultation with relevant scientific unit leaders and program directors, will make all course instructor selections. The department prizes excellence in education and aims to reward outstanding teaching. We do not explicitly tie in teaching evaluations to the compensation model, recognizing the measurement challenges inherent in evaluating teaching excellence, but note here that teaching excellence will be considered in course instructor selection.

The department's assignment of teaching support roles will prioritize large enrollment courses that utilize TA-led labs and other courses with enrollment over 30 where full TA support is warranted, based on course needs and TA availability. The department will provide TAs to courses with less than 25-30 students only in exceptional cases. All courses will have access to Education Program staff support for course preparation and a general all-course floater TA to provide administrative support during the semester. Faculty may use their discretionary funds to hire a TA if one is not provided by the department. However, none of these faculty-identified TAs may be students that are needed by the department as TAs for other courses, in any given semester; doctoral student TAs need be pre-approved by the department for eligibility; and all TAs must be paid the standard MSPH-set rate.

In general, classes with fewer than 10 students will be cancelled in any given semester. Classes that do not enroll more than 10 students for multiple consecutive years will be discontinued. Exceptions will be made for classes under these enrollment minimums that are central or required for the teaching program.

The chair reserves the necessary right to occasionally adjust these policies in order to respect particular course needs and demands with deviations from the general template noted above.

Compensation for leadership responsibilities

Leadership responsibility compensation depends on type of responsibility but broadly this refers to chairing a large committee, taking on a named role on a departmental project, or other activities as determined by the chair.