# Support Faculty Workload Assessment Report
# December 18, 2019

**Introduction:**

In 2004-2005 the administrative structure at NTID changed from its three academic centers (CBGS, CAS, CTS) where management for support faculty working with baccalaureate and graduate cross-registered students was separate from the traditional teaching faculty in the two-year degree granting programs.  The new (current) structure joined tutoring and teaching faculty under one chairperson and a mixed model of faculty workload was established.  This management structure has operated for 15 years without review.

The Support Faculty Workload Assessment Committee convened spring semester (2019) to develop and distribute a survey that would help to evaluate the current NTID administrative structure, workload distribution and employee satisfaction within and among all NTID departments related to faculty tutors (support teams).

**Committee members:**

Chair:

Ann Hager, Business Studies

Members:

Sidonie Roepke, Visual Communication Studies

Stacey Davis, Science and Mathematics

Jeanne Yamonaco, Liberal Studies

Karen Beiter, Information and Computing Technologies


This committee thanks the administration for its support of our efforts to gather the necessary data for analysis, which led to the recommendations offered in this report.

**Committee Charge:**

To address the future needs of our tutoring faculty who support Baccalaureate students, this committee will document the current support model and collect data to evaluate the effectiveness of the current administrative structure and workload distribution within and among different departments. This committee will make recommendations to the NTID AVP for Academic Affairs and NFC upon completion of our review.

Timeline: Spring semester (2185)

1. Develop a survey for all support faculty and Coordinators across all ranks of lecturers, tenure track and tenured faculty under the current administrative structure. This survey will:
   a. Analyze current tutoring practices.
   b. Compare workload distributions and correlate it to the NTID Semester Workload Guidelines (revised January, 2019)
   c. Assess faculty development and training opportunities related to *tutoring.*
   d. Analyze current coordinator practices/responsibilities.
   e. Compare workload distribution and reduction of teaching/tutoring load for coordinator responsibilities.
   f. Take a snapshot of tutor/coordinator satisfaction

During fall semester (2191), the survey will be distributed to all support faculty, results will be analyzed and the committee will complete the following:

1. A summary report will be created and shared with the AVP of Academic Affairs, the President and NTID Faculty Congress.

2. A Support Faculty job description will be created that will outline the common workload expectations for faculty tutors, with and without teaching expectations.

3. The current Coordinator job description will be reviewed and revised to support a consistent framework for workload expectations in that role.

4. The committee will make recommendations to modify the NTID Semester Workload Guidelines (revised January 2019) incorporating the survey results and narrative comments to create an equitable workload balance for all faculty roles in each department.

5. Recommendations will be made for changes to the current administrative structure based on survey findings that will strengthen and/or improve the future role of Support Faculty.

The Support Faculty Workload Assessment Survey included 52 individual questions focusing on a wide range of issues uniquely related to providing "support" to cross-registered students.  The survey was distributed on October 4, 2019 to 34 support faculty tutors.  We met with NFC spring semester to inform them of our charge and to avoid duplication of content and questions in the development of our perspective surveys.  We scheduled our release date to follow the NFC Workload Survey to minimize survey fatigue and encourage a high response rate.  After two weeks, 33 out of 34 support faculty completed the survey with a 97% response rate!  This report will summarize the results into the following four categories:

1. Tutoring expectations, job descriptions and work environment for faculty tutors and Program Support Coordinators.
2. Workload balance with the "mixed model."
3. Tutor satisfaction with current administrative structure and semester workload reporting expectations.
4. Professional development activities and mentoring for tutors.

**Tutoring expectations, job descriptions and the work environment:**

There are currently six support teams established to provide support to 556 Baccalaureate and Graduate students enrolled in programs at RIT.  In addition, there are 182 students enrolled in Associate+Bachelor's/Pre-Baccalaureate programs, which impacts tutoring demands for courses taken outside of NTID.  The six support teams and staffing are as follows:

NTID Business Studies
for E. Phillip Saunders College of Business and Applied Science and Technology
Coordinator:
Kelly Metz Davis, LOW-3306
Tutors:
Dr. Scot Atkins, LOW-3302                     Ann Hager, LOW-3308
Kathleen Brady, LOW-3304                     Adrianna Smart, LBJ-2780
Kelly Metz Davis, LOW-3306
(We also support the School of Individualized Studies, Hospitality, and business courses in other colleges of RIT.)

NTID Liberal Studies for College of Liberal Arts
Tutors:
Kenny Lerner, LBR-2230                       Rain Bosworth, LBJ-225
Jeanne Yamonaco, LBJ-2236                    Aimee Whyte, LBJ-2238
(In addition to tutoring Perspectives, Immersions, and major courses, we assist with the English-related needs of all students.)

NTID Visual Communication Studies for the College of Art and Design
Coordinator:
Sidone Roepke, BOO-3451
Tutors:

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| Stacy Bick, BOO-1536 | Sidonie Roepke, BOO-3451 |
| Shannon Connell, BOO-3447 | Ernie Roszkowski, BOO-1528 |
| Eric Kunsman, GAN-2244 | Kurt Stoskopf, LBJ-1270 |

(We support some courses in Media Arts & Technology program, College of Engineering Technology.)

NTID Engineering Studies for College of Engineering Technology
and Kate Gleason College of Engineering
Coordinator:
Scott Bellinger, GLE-1113
Tutors:
Scott Bellinger, GLE-1113
Asher Kirschbum (adjunct)

NTID Information and Computing Studies for Golisano College of Computing
and Information Sciences
Coordinator:
Karen Beiter, GOL-1511
Tutors:
Brian Nadworny, GOL-1517
Karen Beiter, GOL-1511
Peer tutors available in GOL-1510 Lab
(We support programming, computer technology, both software and hardware courses in the Colleges of Art and Design, Business, Engineering, Engineering Technology, Health Science and Technology, and Science.)

NTID Science and Math for the College of Science and College of Health Sciences and Technology
Coordinator:
Stacey Davis, GOS-A180
Tutors:

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| Dr. Alex Austin, GOS-A152 | Sarah Sarchet, GOS-A154 |
| Elizabeth Ayers, GOS-A156 | David Spiecker, GOS-A170 |
| Stacey Davis,  GOS-A180 | Dr. Viet Le, LBJ-2260 |
| Dr. Austin Gehret, GOS-A168 | Dr. Jason Nordhaus, LBJ-2258 |
| William Gustafson, GOS-A174 | Camille Ouellette, GOS-A146 |
| Dr. Bonnie Jacob, LBJ-1276 | Melissa Skyer, GOS-A158 |
| Jennifer Swartzenberg, GOS-A164 | |
| Karen Tobin, LBJ-2256 | |

(As a service department, we support all the science and mathematics courses required by all students, in addition to students in our degree programs.)

Support team demographics:
- Twice as many lecturers compared to tenured faculty.
- The length of service for the majority (81%) of the current tutor pool is less than 10 years.

Due to the fact we are not assigned classrooms to provide tutoring, our offices in the colleges of RIT and NTID are important to the quality of service we provide. We asked faculty if they had the right space, furniture, equipment and software to effectively provide tutoring support for cross-registered students. Survey response data:

- The right office furniture:  40% yes, 60% some/no.
- The right equipment/software:  80% yes, 20% no.
- The right space: 60% yes, 40% no.

As the number of cross-registered students continues to grow, the need for the right space and furniture has increased. Tutors often need to provide group tutoring to satisfy the demand for their services and many responded that they need larger offices to accommodate more than one-on-one tutoring or have access to a dedicated tutoring space. Half of the tutors responded that they would like to have a longer/wider table or a round table to accommodate more students. Some tutors have had to purchase their own specific items to make their offices "work" or they have needed to search in surplus to see if they can find the right tables/chairs/desks. Since we spend a large part of the day "sitting" while working with students, many tutors commented that they would like to have a *standing desk* to help with back pain and stiffness. Many tutors responded that they felt they were not <u>equally valued</u> when compared to the teaching faculty housed in LBJ. Every office in LBJ received new furniture and standing desks over a year ago and faculty housed in the other colleges have yet to receive anything. With that being said, our office needs are **NOT** one size fits all. Our office is our classroom. We need to be able to request specific furniture to make the offices, in which we are housed in the colleges of RIT, a comfortable and effective place to work with our students.

The role of a faculty tutor is not the same as a classroom teacher who controls all aspects of what is taught. Effective tutoring requires liaison efforts with the faculty assigned to teach the courses, significant preparation to master the material being taught in addition to understanding the approach that the instructor is using to deliver the information. Often tutors need to supplement the materials used by the classroom instructor to clarify handouts, projects, homework assignments and presentation slides.

When faculty were asked if they were provided with a job description that clearly described the role and responsibilities of a support faculty tutor, 64% responded no. In addition, we asked if they had received training or mentoring for their role and only 10% said yes (53% replied "some" and 37% replied no). While teaching and tutoring share some of the same strategies when working with deaf and hard of hearing students, the unique expectations that are required to successfully support our cross-registered students

need to be clearly described in writing and shared with each and every tutor.  This will support the clear and consistent performance expectations for support faculty and for the traditional teaching faculty who occasionally take on a tutoring load.  In addition, a mentor should be assigned to any faculty member taking on a tutoring responsibility for the first time.  These mentors should be faculty who have successfully served in a traditional tutoring role for more than 5 years.

The role of support coordinator has evolved over the past 15 years.  The original job description fit on one page and had a workload reduction of 50%.  The current coordinator job description, developed in April 2015, is **three** pages long and the workload reduction is now "an amount to be determined by the department chairperson".

Support coordinators were asked if they receive a workload reduction for their role and the following data was collected:

- 1 coordinator – 50% reduction
- 1 coordinator – nothing
- 1 coordinator – one course reduction
- 1 coordinator – I received a workload reduction this year for the first time in three years, but it's not officially documented.
- 1 coordinator did not report.

The coordinator responsibilities have *increased* while the workload reduction to serve in the role has *decreased or disappeared*.  The job description for support coordinator needs to be revised and a standard workload reduction or stipend **must** be set for all coordinators.


**Workload balance and the "mixed model" approach:**

In 2005, the administrative structure at NTID changed as the Institute began the implementation of the NTID Strategic Vision for 2010.

> "The goal of the Strategic Vision is to increase the number of deaf and hard-of-hearing students successfully completing baccalaureate degrees in order to increase their ability to compete in the technology job market where the baccalaureate degree is becoming the degree of choice by employers, while continuing to offer degrees to associate-level students. <u>One of the major goals of the re-organization of Academic Affairs was to increase the number of faculty available to support baccalaureate students</u>." (2005 NTID Annual Report)

The strategy to accomplish this new goal was the "mixed model" approach that required all faculty at NTID to both teach in the two-year degree programs **and** provide tutoring to students at the baccalaureate and graduate levels.  The mixed model workload was evaluated through a number of specific questions and the opportunity to share independent comments.  While faculty enjoy their roles as tutors, they did express their

concerns regarding the mixed model and workload balance.  The following summarizes questions related to the mixed model of workload:

1. During AY2018, did your workload require that you teach and tutor during one or both semesters?
    80% responded yes, 20% responded no.

2. When you teach a class and also tutor courses at RIT, is your tutoring workload adjusted at all?
    39% responded yes, 61% responded no.

3. Have you been paid overload when your normal tutoring workload is increased?
    27% responded yes, 73% responded no.
    ➢ Of the 27% who responded yes, 50% said that they needed to negotiate to get paid overload.

4. If you are assigned a new course to tutor, are you given time to prepare?
    90% responded no.

5. Do you feel that your workload is equitable to the traditional teaching faculty in your department? (AAS/AOS degree programs)
    37% responded yes, 63% responded no.

There have been a number of challenges with the mixed model "universal plan" for all faculty at NTID.  Based on our survey results and a common understanding that has come from 15 years of practice, the mixed model is far from universally applied.  The majority of support faculty tutors are assigned dual workloads (tutoring & teaching), while a small percentage of traditional teaching faculty have the same dual assignment.  When the traditional teaching faculty are assigned a course to tutor, many are given a semester or more to prepare.  This is not the common practice with support faculty (see question 4 above).  The following comments made by support faculty reflect the feeling of inequity in the mixed model:

*It would be much more consistent use of my time if I was teaching 3 courses per semester. I would be in control of what is being taught.  When tutoring I need time to prepare, read class notes, read the textbook, review course materials before I meet the student(s) for tutoring. Then tutoring the student(s).  I also need time to meet with the professor(s) at their request and mine based on what is being taught.  It is difficult when one has no control over what is being taught in the classroom when one is the tutor.*

*Liaison issues arise and need immediate attention which can cause schedule conflicts/additional workload.*

*Depends on the classes needed for tutoring services. Often need to prepare ahead of time, and still have not had chance to stay on top of the readings/class notes.*

*Faculty in the AAS/AOS programs have way lighter loads than tutors. They control how the class goes and I've seen faculty in those programs consistently get overload pay or course releases when requested/needed.*

*I've had teaching faculty in my department flat out tell me that they would never want to tutor because they see my schedule and don't want to do that. Also the differentiation in difficulty of material is not equitable. I have the skills/knowledge to teach the content they teach, but they do not always have the skills and knowledge to tutor the material I support. They also have set schedules and many work what I would call bankers hours (and I'm not talking about the always open ATMs, I'm talking about the tellers!). I'm physically chained to campus more than they are. I'm sure we both take and do work at home too, but I often have to come in when the students are available (later in the day, weekends, etc).*

*It sometimes seems that faculty in the mixed model do more work than faculty that only teach. But perhaps this is because those that teach remain on the other side of campus and are not seen.*

*Many teaching only faculty are expected to teach the same classes over and over. As a teacher/tutor I have been asked to teach several different classes as needed with "on the fly" prep as well as tutor courses I may or may not have any previously knowledge or experience about also with "on the fly" prep. I always do whatever needed to be a successful teacher or tutor, meaning taking on extra and usually outside of regular work hours prep to become knowledgeable and stay ahead of the students. This is usually without much notice and without additional pay. I do this without complaint, as I feel this is part of what it means to be a good employee. I have seen, however that other non-traditional tutors (tech teachers doing some tutoring) do not feel the same and insist on additional pay and/or semester before prep time to acquire the skills to tutor different subjects. I feel the expectation of tutors ongoing professional development and knowledge acquisition is much more demanding than that of the technical teaching side.*

*If you look at the sides of the department, it's quite clear that the tutoring side tends to spend a lot of hours, including outside of 9-5, on work. Some of it may be self-inflicted, but tutoring schedules and implicit pressures do not tend to make a good work-life balance. Here are the main three problems with tutoring from my perspective. 1. Tutors are responsible for managing their hours. Not enough students coming in? You better find them! This creates problems for us, and also is not healthy for the students (students thinking we have unlimited time only hurts their work ethic in their courses). 2. Numbers of contact hours and numbers of students do not adequately illustrate how much work a tutor is doing. We have had tutors who refuse to tutor more than one or two different courses, while the rest of the tutors might have a dozen courses. That's crazy and unfair. 3. Teaching faculty are known to get "perks" like a course release for teaching a course new to them, or for working in a group on curriculum development, but tutoring faculty generally don't. I only did when I asked, and then it was given with reluctance.*

*I do not feel that my work is equitable to those teaching technical courses because there are things that I have to factor in such as: sudden prep time for classes that I never have tutored before, covering other classes/sessions as needed, liaison with faculty members as needed and prep for my own classes on top of the support coordinator responsibilities.  The time that the other faculty in the AAS/AOS program get to prepare for their classes is significantly higher than us following the mixed model.*

*The preparation time, which does not count towards either efforts, is disproportionately affecting for support faculty. Preparation for a class that one does not teach is an ongoing, if at times exhausting, endeavor. Effective tutoring involves maximizing a student's contact time with you. That means a tutor MUST be current with the topic, discussions, activities that are occurring in the classroom in their absence. These becomes an even greater challenge for faculty undertaking a mixture of their own NTID classroom teaching and/or supporting a class for the first time where there may exist a significant knowledge gap. Preparation for NTID classroom faculty members if more predictable, routine, and above all else, in their control. The lack of control support faculty have with what happens in the classroom is maybe the most challenging aspect to the job. Support faculty who care really work hard to achieve as much control as possible.*

*As a tutor we work longer hours and have to put much more prep time in for courses that we do not control.  The level of coursework our students are facing is much harder than the courses taught by the technical faculty.*

*It takes much more time to prep when you are supporting up to 35 classes with various sections taught by different faculty. A lot of time is used to discuss the faculty members expectations which do not count as traditional hours. A student also often does not give a lot of prior notice to what they need support with.*

*NO WAY.  Teaching associate level courses is a whole different animal than tutoring upper level science courses.  There is also a level of control you have when you are teaching that you don't have when you are tutoring.  Overall, the level of the content and the amount of prep is MUCH more for tutoring than for teaching.*

*We are asked to teach on top of a large tutoring workload. We are asked to do more tutoring but do not get compensated for this. Plus, scholarship is a challenge whenever the tutoring workload increases.*

*In the most humble way possible, I do believe that the level and depth of knowledge that tutoring faculty need to have is way beyond that of the standard technical teaching faculty.  We are expected to have or to acquire expertise in courses at the AS, BS, and Grad level without much or any prep time. This requires a self motivated employee that is doing their own outside research through learning new software programs, becoming certified in technical expertise, attending additional classes, building relationships with faculty, reading professional journals and articles, keeping up with industry trends, etc. I really enjoy being in this type of role as it is a challenge that keeps me intellectually stimulated. However, I do not feel as though the LBJ side of the house knows all that goes into our roles as tutors and therefore can be looked down on or ignored by colleagues and administration.  In an effort to cultivate employee growth and morale in the support areas, a better understanding of our role and an appreciation and acknowledgement for what is required of us (monetarily or not) needs to be made.*

*Support needs to be shown through additional professional development, multi-disciplinary collaboration, and an improved oversight strategy.*

Many support faculty commented on the significant preparation time that is required to provide effective tutoring to students which is *not recognized* in any way through the biannual Instructional/Support Faculty Workload Report.  While faculty tutors are required to complete this report at the end of each semester, teaching faculty are not required to track their time spent with students in such a detailed manner.  While teaching faculty are required to hold office hours, they can use that time for other work when students do not utilize it and are not required to track their contact with students.  This report, in its current format does not represent the true "workload" and time invested by tutors to be effective in their faculty roles.  The following comments reflect the feelings of faculty regarding the workload report:

*Thank you for creating this survey for tutors to be able to express their opinions, free of concern regarding being identified.   It feels as though the NTID administration is not concerned about the many hours and courses we are responsible for tutoring each semester, as well as teaching courses. The hours spent tutoring doesn't seem to be valued. The process of tutoring does not seem to be valued. When it comes time for promotion/tenure, not having a person who has worked as a tutor on your committee puts you at a great disadvantage. Faculty who only teach don't value the process of tutoring, another faculty members' materials.   Having us complete workload reports, which is poorly set up, that does not account for the time we need to prepare for tutoring is providing false information. We can also tutor courses which have the same course title, but are taught by multiple professors, each teaching the material in a different way, with different focuses. These are truly different courses. Tutoring is not just "face time" with a student. This workload report also tells us we can't count a student again if we already tutor the student in another course. This makes no sense. <u>The workload report form is indicative of the misunderstanding there is throughout NTID of the tutoring process and more importantly the value of tutoring for bachelor's level students.</u>*

*Oh, and the mixed model....although it looks fair on paper, it's not fair in reality.  It's more like a 70-70 split, especially if you want to do both well.  And although there are guidelines on paper -- they don't fit all disciplines equally.  There are also issues with multiple sections taught by different instructors...those are often different courses, even though we have to report them as one on the workload document.  Thanks for listening to how we feel.  Support faculty are often overlooked and under-valued.  We often feel the red headed step child.  The students make this job worthwhile!*

We would recommend that the Instructional/Support Faculty Workload Report and the NTID Faculty Workload Guidelines be reviewed and revised to better reflect the true components of workload required by the role of faculty tutor.  We would recommend that a committee be drawn from current support coordinators and faculty tutors to perform this review.

To guide the new mixed model of workload that was established in 2005, all support teams under the previous Center for Baccalaureate and Graduate Studies were separated and individually assigned to the equivalent technical department at NTID. Chairs primarily residing in LBJ (five out of six are housed in LBJ) are now expected to manage and develop faculty housed in the other colleges of RIT. Based on the results of our survey, it is clear that support faculty function without the support and guidance from their chairs. Based on responses from the workload survey, it is clear that Chairs spend minimal time (a few times a month, 1 or 2 times a semester, never) physically in the support team areas. Department meetings or one-on-one faculty meetings with the Chair primarily take place in LBJ.

Faculty were asked if they had engaged in professional development activities related to tutoring. One-third of faculty responded yes, while two-thirds responded some or no. When polled about the types of professional development activities attended, many responses described attendance at discipline-based conferences or other professional activities. NTID based sign language classes were identified as professional development activities by many faculty. Faculty engaged in professional development specific for tutoring through the Informal Tutoring Discussions and other Power Workshops offered when we had a Professional Development Coordinator for Teaching Excellence.

To better support the unique needs of faculty tutor's role (tutoring, liaising, advising, and professional development) we recommend that a Director of Support Faculty position be created. This Director will be housed in a central location on the RIT side of campus. The person assuming this role must have a minimum of five years tutoring experience on one of the support teams. By using an internal experienced faculty member, this should help boost moral by having the support of someone who understands the support role intimately. This recommendation is supported by the following comments:

*We need a Center for Tutoring Support on the RIT side.*

*The process of tutoring does not seem to be valued by NTID administration.*

*The workload report form is indicative of the misunderstanding there is throughout NTID of the tutoring process and more importantly, the value of tutoring for B. S. level students.*

*Support faculty are often overlooked and undervalued.*

Faculty tutors clearly want change, but when asked "Do you enjoy working as a faculty tutor," the response was 100% positive. Faculty enjoy working with motivated BS/BFA level students and creating that one-on-one connection. The highlight of the job is that moment when you see the student actually understand the course material and '*that great relief that the information has been clarified and explained in a way that is understandable.'* The role of a faculty tutor is challenging yet fulfilling in many untraditional ways. It is our goal as a committee to create an environment where tutors feel supported and valued by everyone, not only by the students they support.

## Summary of Recommendations

1. Create a *Director of Support Faculty* position to better support the unique needs of the faculty tutor's role (tutoring, liaising, advising, and professional development). This Director will work from a central location on the RIT side of campus. We recommend that the person assuming this role must currently have a minimum of five years tutoring experience on one of the support teams.

2. Create a detailed job description for the role of faculty tutor and distribute to all support faculty.

3. The job description for support coordinators must be reviewed and adjusted to establish a reasonable and consistent workload release (or stipend) for service.

4. A comprehensive review of furniture and equipment in all support faculty offices (in the colleges of RIT) should be conducted and a report of needed resources will be presented by May 2020.

5. We recommend that the Instructional/Support Faculty Workload Report and the NTID Faculty Workload Guidelines be reviewed and revised to better reflect the true components of workload required by the role of faculty tutor. We would recommend that a committee be drawn from current support coordinators and faculty tutors to perform this review.

6. We recommend that the mixed model approach to assigning workload for tutoring and teaching be reviewed and revised by a committee comprised of both traditional teaching and support faculty.