Department of English
Student and Colleague Availability Guidelines Proposal

“To enhance the possibilities of faculty-student interaction outside of the classroom and to
promote a more collegial teaching/learning/research community in Arts and Letters, all full-time
faculty are expected to maintain a significant on-campus presence, making themselves available to
students and colleagues and participating in activities related to the improvement of pedagogy and
student advisement, recruitment and retention, peer and student mentoring, and research and
creative activity.” [from College statement on office hours]

As a PhD-granting department, we recognize that excellent teaching and mentorship, as well as
scholarly and creative productivity, involve being available to meet with students and colleagues,
serving on student and department committees, and participating in an active academic
community. As a result, faculty members typically exceed the minimum expectations for student
and colleague availability outlined here.

Faculty will be available to students and colleagues for at least six hours per week through a
combination of the activities enumerated below:

1. Faculty teaching face-to-face lecture classes or seminars should hold a minimum of one open-
door office hour per week per three-credit class. Office hours must be held in faculty
offices during regular business hours.

2. Faculty must make themselves available for appointments for a minimum of one additional hour
per week for students legitimately unable to attend usual office hours. Any students who
fail to attend a scheduled appointment or fail to provide sufficient notice of cancelation
should make arrangements to use regularly scheduled office hours in the future.

3. Faculty should typically respond to email or voice mail that demonstrates professional etiquette
within 48 hours during regular semesters, except for university holidays and weekends.
Students needing more than basic information should be encouraged to visit or call during
office hours or to make an appointment to meet in person, though faculty might expect to
spend at least one hour per week responding to email.

4. Faculty should make themselves available on campus to meet with colleagues or participate in
department, college, or university service or committee activities for a minimum of one
hour per week, including department or graduate-student-committee meetings, peer
mentoring, student advising, recruitment activities, guest lectures or job talks, etc. Service
should be documented in annual review materials.

Additional guidelines:

5. For faculty teaching one or more online classes, virtual office hours may be substituted for up to
one-third of required on-campus office hours.

6. Faculty who teach field- or practicum-based courses can substitute field supervision for up to
one-third of required on-campus office hours.
7. Faculty must post office hours outside of their offices and on syllabi and must notify department staff about office hours by the end of the first week of classes each semester.

8. For faculty who teach in the evening, some office hours may be scheduled after 5 p.m. prior to the scheduled night class.