Collateral Pedagogies: Exploring the Performative Powers of Workload Allocation Models

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Abstract

In Science & Technology Studies and beyond, administrative instruments are recognized for their capacity to impact organizations and institutions. Whether intended or not, administrative instruments rework the core activities that organizations or institutions are put into the world to conduct. In this article, we study an important type of administrative instrument in universities, namely workload allocation models (WAMs), and how it impacts a core activity of universities, namely teaching. In order to explore this question, we draw on the concept of performative effects from Science & Technology Studies (STS). We conceptualize these effects as "collateral pedagogies", drawing inspiration from the Science and Technology Studies approach to performativity and building on John Law's concept of "collateral realities". We argue that, while some performative effects of administrative instruments such as workload allocation models are visible because they constitute matters of concern in the contexts where they are introduced, such instruments may also produce more subtle effects. These effects may not be immediately apparent yet impact fundamental aspects of organizational practices. For example, most WAM's in our study enacted university teaching as a standardized/able enterprise disconnected from its context and content by way of standardized formats and quantities, instead of an open process that takes the students, the particularities of the course, or teachers' professional backgrounds and experience into consideration. Thus, it is important to examine WAMs closely.

Keywords

university teaching; education; administrative instruments; workload allocation models; ontological politics.

1. Introduction

In Science & Technology Studies and beyond, administrative instruments are recognized for their capacity to impact organizations and institutions (Espeland and Sauder 2016; Gorur 2018a; Kornberger et al. 2015; Piattoeva and Boden 2020). Administrative instruments, such as performance measurement and funding models, are far from neutral. They may organize and disorganize social relations (Ratner and Plotnikof 2022), order time (Lunde and Piattoeva 2025; Piattoeva

and Vasileva 2023), standardize goals (Fenwick and Edwards 2014; Gorur 2018b), configure their users (Gorur and Dey 2021), and shape organizational decision-making (Madsen 2025). Many of these consequences are strategically envisioned – and perhaps even intended – by the actors introducing the instruments and are furthermore articulated openly. Meanwhile, administrative instruments often do much more than reorganizing intended aspects of social life of organizations. Sometimes they rework the core activities of organizations such as universities. These impacts, though unintended, are significant to the organizations involved, yet they often escape the scrutiny of researchers studying administrative technologies. In this article, we seek to address this oversight by focusing on how an important type of administrative instrument in universities, namely workload allocation models (WAMs), impacts a core activity of universities, namely teaching.

As existing research demonstrates (Kenny 2018; Kenny and Fluck 2014; Kenny and Fluck 2017; Papadopoulos 2017), the aim of introducing WAMs in universities is "to find a way to allocate academic work in a fair, credible and transparent way" (Kenny and Fluck 2017, 504). However, WAMs often fail to achieve the aims of transparency and fairness that justify their introduction. For instance, WAMs' granular calculations "do not reflect the actual true time it takes to accomplish a task" (Vardi 2009, 506). While making some parts of work more transparent, WAMs render other tasks invisible. These include "academic housework":

> [...] service "chores" such as complex module leadership, degree program management, student recruitment or admissions work, membership of teaching committees, personal and welfare tutoring, attending graduation ceremonies, and many other activities grouped under the catch – all formal and informal terms of "citizenship" or "being a good colleague". (Steinþórsdóttir et al. 2021, 1861)

Housework tasks are often allocated to women yet remain uncounted in WAMs (Steinþórsdóttir et al. 2021), thereby perpetuating existing gender inequalities and negatively impacting the promotion and careers of female academics. The resulting controversies regarding the accuracy or fairness of calculations often lead to dissatisfaction (Kenny and Fluck 2014; Papadopoulos 2017).

Other studies have focused more on unintended impacts of WAMs on social relations within universities. One study has investigated WAMs as manifestations of political and administrative reforms such as academic capitalism and New Public Management that commodify academic work, even though "academic labor, as intellectual work, is a highly personal and personalized process that is a key part of academic identities" (Nedeva et al. 2012, 350). Another study has pointed out how WAMs also lead to gaming practices and (re)valuations of academic tasks (Steinþórsdóttir et al. 2021). Hence, the introduction of WAMs can clash with the self-management approach that traditionally characterizes academic work (Kenny et al. 2012). The measurement of productivity conducted through WAMs and other instruments leads to a sense of inauthenticity among academics (Ball 2000). It is thus a known critique that WAMs impact academics' social relations and attitudes. Nevertheless, only very few studies have investigated how WAMs impact the core activity of university teaching, for example by producing forms of strategizing (Kenny 2018; Kenny and Fluck 2017). Teaching-related decisions are sometimes driven by the allocation of points, rather than considerations of what constitutes good or appropriate pedagogy. Staff seek to maximize their points and minimize work excluded from WAMs, such as updating teaching materials (Vardi 2009). In this article, we follow this line of research to study how WAMs impact university pedagogies.

Pedagogy is a tricky notion because it refers to slightly different questions in different languages and scholarly traditions. In the Cambridge Dictionary, pedagogy is defined as "the study of the methods and activities of teaching" (Cambridge Dictionary, *n.d.*), thus relating pedagogy narrowly to teaching. In the Nordic tradition, the scope is broader, including questions concerning how upbringing, teaching, and "bildung" (which could be translated as *education*) relate to society and the individual – for example, in terms of the purposes of these activities and the intentions of the "pedagogues" (Sæverot and Kristensen 2022). Based on these understandings, "pedagogy" thus refers to a specific set of norms regarding how to educate and for what purpose, and to associated methods or approaches for achieving this purpose (Curren 2003, 2). As we argue in this paper, administrative technologies such as WAMs do not explicitly address pedagogy but nevertheless begin to co-constitute aspects of pedagogy, including teaching arrangements, meaning that it is no longer (or not merely) defined by professional norms and methods.

We proceed by developing the notion of "collateral pedagogies" based on key concepts from STS, including calculative practices and collateral realities. Next, we outline our methodological approach to analyzing calculative practices and contrasting different WAMs. We then present four cases of WAMs, analyzing how their calculative practices produce particular collateral pedagogies. We conclude the paper with a discussion of collateral pedagogies in studies of administrative instruments in educational contexts.

2. Collateral Pedagogies: A Performative Perspective on Workload Allocation Models

In order to study how administrative practices produce pedagogies, we draw on the concept of performative effects from Science & Technology Studies (STS) (Gorur et al. 2019). Performativity has at least two different meanings (Wilkins et al. 2024): a neoliberal technology of governance based on judgments, comparisons, and displays of performance (for example, Hardy and Lewis 2017; Morrissey 2015); and an onto-epistemological position in research inspired by socio-material and new materialist perspectives (for example, Law and Urry 2004). While WAMs can be conceptualized as an example of performative technologies in the former sense, it is the latter meaning that we explore here. In STS, as well as other socio-material and new materialist approaches, all practices are seen as producing, and thus performing, realities. Reality is *done* and *enacted* rather than merely observed and represented (Mol 1999, 77, *emphasis in original*). The notion of "enactment" here references the idea of bringing reality into being rather than describing a gap between policy and implementation familiar from the studies of education policy (for example, Ball et al. 2012; Finefter-Rosenbluh and Perrotta 2023; Rainford 2020). Performativity as an onto-epistemological position thus invites us to go beyond critiques of WAMs as neoliberal governance technologies and instead focus on how specific *practices* produce specific realities. The performative perspective asks what realities emerge from the calculative practices of WAMs and thereby examines the implications for universities of introducing such models.

The performative perspective focuses on what emerges from various practices, including administrative instruments. However, the terms "performativity" and "performative effects" remain broad and cultivate different empirical focuses in terms of what types of effects one pays

attention to. We draw on Law (2012), who suggested that the notion of "collateral realities" may be useful for distinguishing between different kinds of performative effects. Law (*ibid.*) differentiates between *explicit* realities that are explicitly described and enacted, and *collateral* realities. Explicit realities are articulated openly, like WAMs addressing workloads. Explicit realities are in this sense easy to see and critique (as many of us do when we feel misrepresented by the calculative techniques used by WAMs). Previous studies have examined explicit realities through controversies in the wake of the introduction of new administrative or calculative instruments. For example, educational studies have examined the understanding of learning and curriculum enacted by PISA (The Programme for International Student Assessment) (Pettersson 2020) and the production of categories of non-European students as low achievers enacted by Danish national testing (Ratner 2020). In turn, *collateral realities* are enacted indirectly, accidentally, and along the way, without being strategically pursued by anyone. They are not declared as an instrument's purpose, but are implicit effects of practices (Law 2012). For instance, as shown in a study of alcohol policies, gender as an individual attribute is enacted as a collateral reality by the discursive practices of Australian alcohol policies (Duncan et al. 2022). As an analytical concept, the notion of collateral realities differs from the notion of unintended consequences by combining an attention towards the specific assemblage of specific and vernacular or general realities emerging from local practices. Collateral realities include both the reproduction of vernacular social theories through a range of parallel practices (for example, standard calculations of time, binary notions of gender, or singular understandings of national belonging) and performative effects that are particular to the instrument in question. In our understanding, unintended consequences reference effects of the implementation of specific policies compared to pregiven intentions located with particular (individual) actors (Dahler-Larsen 2014), and thereby the notion of unintended consequences draw on a different philosophical tradition than STS, which is less focused on intentions and more inclined to view practices as emerging from a multiplicity of human and non-human actors.

Both vernacular and particular effects are important as part of the ontological politics of the production of realities in/through practices. Ontological politics are "not a politics of who (who gets to speak; act; etc.) but a politics of what (what is the reality that takes shape and that various people come to live with?)" (Mol 2014). With the concept of ontological politics, we are sensitized to the multiple performances of a university and university pedagogy through a myriad of (sometimes routine and mundane) practices and tools – including administrative and statistical tools and practices. It is in relation to this sense of ontological politics that we find it important to study WAMs and the collateral pedagogies they produce.

By focusing on the collateral realities that get done and undone by WAMs, we may get a sense of what kinds of academic worlds and subjectivities they make more or less real (Law and Ruppert 2013; Mol 1999). However, while the WAMs analyzed in this paper produce explicit realities related to academic work and management as well as a range of conventional collateral realities related to measurement and time, we focus on the specific collateral realities that we term *collateral pedagogies*. Recalling the definition of pedagogy in the introduction as a set of norms for how and why to educate, the notion of collateral pedagogies may at first glance appear like an oxymoron. However, drawing on STS, we suggest a slightly different conceptualization of pedagogies as constituted by *practices* rather than merely by norms. In this conceptualization, pedagogies can

be understood as both practices and realities emerging from other practices, such as the explicit articulation of norms and didactical orchestrations of teaching. However, our interest concerns the production of pedagogies through administration and its underpinning instruments. We argue that these practices perform or produce particular pedagogies (or rather aspects of pedagogy such as teaching arrangements), but often without a stated intention of doing so.

Based on the notion of collateral realities and our performative conceptualization of pedagogies, we understand collateral pedagogies as educational practices that emerge implicitly, accidentally, and unremarkably as a result of seemingly unrelated practices. These were not mentioned unprompted by the interviewed teachers and managers in our study, but only reflected upon and unpacked when we asked about the effects of calculative practices on teaching. Collateral pedagogies are a fundamental part of the reality that emerges from WAMs and, by extension, other instruments used in educational management and administration (see, for example, Decuypere and Landri 2021; Laursen and Jensen 2025).

3. Methodology: Contrasting Calculative Practices

Like several other socio-material theorists, Law proposed to study performativity by studying practices:

> Practices are detectable and somewhat ordered sets of material-semiotic relations. To study practices is therefore to undertake the analytical and empirical task of exploring possible patterns of relations, and how it is that these get assembled in particular locations. (Law 2012, 157)

In this article, we examine the realities that are constantly produced and reproduced through the various calculative practices constituting WAMs.

Vardi (2009) differentiates between three types of WAMs: actual-hours-based, contact-hours-based, and points-based models. Actual hours models quantify and document the actual time it takes to complete a task. Contact hours models are centered on, for instance, the number of hours an academic should teach per week. These two types of models use time as a unit of calculation. Meanwhile, points-based models use utility units to describe workload. Our empirical material includes three contact-hour-based models and one points-based model. All WAMs in our study seem to depict the same thing – academic work/workload in universities. But the principles at work are not the same. The criteria for defining, selecting, measuring, and dividing workload vary despite a common official purpose of establishing fairness, transparency, and objectivity in the allocation of work. For instance, some WAMs include the allocation of a lump sum of work hours for the development of a new course or the revision of an existing one, while others do not. This difference matters for both the general idea of what university teaching is and the likelihood of teachers rethinking curriculum and teaching methods in ways that go beyond minute changes to already well-rehearsed course designs. Similarly, some WAMs include extra preparation hours for those teaching a course for the first time, while others do not, thereby enacting the resources of early career academics or academics with new tasks differently. In this sense, the specificities of calculative instruments construct their performativity.

Methodologically, studying performativity and the produced collateral realities involves empirical attention to practices of producing objects and subjects through assemblages of relations and the gaps, aporias, and tensions between practices and the realities they produce (Law 2012, 171). Law speaks of "selection", "juxtaposition", "deletion", "ranking", and "framing" as the practices that we might look for in our material. However, as practices are specific and related to particular contexts and instruments, we find other practices to be of importance for our analysis of WAMs. We are particularly interested in the ways in which WAMs partition, categorize, standardize, commensurate, particularize, frame, and name what they calculate: the workload. In addition, we are interested in how the calculative practices establish relationships between academic work and university pedagogies. In our reading, such practices are performed by a multiplicity of actors including the calculative models of WAMs in various hybrid assemblages also involving human beings. In our study, we focus on the calculative practices displayed in the documents defining the WAMs of the case universities as well as practices involving humans in specific situations and locations.

Meanwhile, WAMs and their calculative practices are not foreign to us but part of our everyday lives as academics working in two different universities. Furthermore, they function through conventional practices of standardization. Both factors mean that we need to defamiliarize ourselves from the WAMs to analyze them. Hence, we have selected four different WAMs to be able to contrast different practices across several models. The four cases are not national cases – because of the status of the university as "an international institution embedded in the nation-state" (Brøgger and Moscovitz 2022), we cannot first and foremost understand the WAMs as determined by their national contexts. Instead, we view them as instruments embedded in specific organizations and determined by a complex set of international, national, and local influences. The purpose of contrasting WAMs is not to compare and evaluate the models, but to make visible the specific practices and collateral pedagogies each performs.

The four WAMs were first and foremost examined in their textual form (i.e., official instructions in written documents or on university websites). In our first reading of the documents, we sought to familiarize ourselves with the models, selecting the most relevant text passages for our analysis of calculative practices. In our second reading, we mapped similarities and differences in relation to calculative practices. To support our readings and analyses of the documents, as well as develop insights into the use of WAMs, we interviewed 23 members of university staff, including heads of schools and their administrative managers, heads of departments, teachers, and union representatives. The interviews serve as background information rather than an object of analysis. However, we include some excerpts from the interviews in the analysis below to either provide background information or further illustrate points from our document analysis.

4. Analysis: Four Cases of Workload Allocation Models

In this first part of our analysis, we present four different empirical examples of WAMs and their configurations of workload, including two from a Danish university (Cases 1 and 4), one from a Norwegian university (Case 2), and one from a Finnish university (Case 3). All universities are research intensive, but highly reliant on public funding, and cover a broad spectrum of

academic subjects. In our study, we focused on social science, education, and humanities faculties. The four WAMs have different histories and are decided and implemented at different organizational levels of the universities as displayed in Table 1. Whereas Cases 1 and 2 were developed at faculty level, thus covering study programs representing neighboring disciplines, Case 3 was developed at university level as part of a university merger and thus required more flexibility to accommodate different traditions across the previous universities and across different disciplines. In turn, Case 4 was developed at school level by the head of school in a school that offers one major degree program as well as a few additional programs, thereby allowing this model to be specific about workloads allocated for each course, rather than using broader standards. The organizational levels at which the WAMs are implemented thus partially explain their differences.

As already mentioned, we approach the four WAMs as cases of different models introduced in particular HEI contexts, rather than national cases. There are nevertheless national regulatory frameworks and tacit conventions with implications for the WAMs. For example, Danish monitoring of higher education includes a "soft" standard (i.e., a voluntary but powerful norm) for the weekly number of contact hours that should be provided to students at BA and MA levels. The equivalent standard regulating the provision of teaching in Case 2 (Norway) is decided at faculty level and is thus more flexible.

	Case 1	***Case 2***	***Case 3***	***Case 4***
Country	Denmark	Norway	Finland	Denmark
Type of WAM	Contact-hour-based model	Contact-hour-based model	Contact-hour-based model	Points-based model
Definitions of workload	Generic standards	Generic standards	Intervals up for negotiation	Course-based standards
Organizational anchor	Decided at faculty level, adapted at school level	Decided at faculty level, adapted at school level	Decided at university level as a compromise during a merger of several universities into one	Decided at school level

Table 1.
Overview of the four cases and their context.

Table 2 provides an overview of the four WAMs, including their workload units; annual teaching workload requirements; and workload calculations for teaching, supervision, exams, and coordination activities. The table is not comprehensive but illustrates the most important categories and standards from each of the four WAMs, thereby providing a solid basis for an analysis of the models and their mutual differences and commonalities. As the table shows, the first three WAMs quantify workload in work hours, often defined in relation to the number of contact hours.

For example, one hour of lecturing equals four work hours (i.e., one hour in the classroom and three hours of preparation) in Cases 1 and 2. The fourth model measures workload in "K", which is a locally developed arbitrary unit of measurement that is much coarser than work hours. This and several other differences make case 4 an interesting and revealing contrast to the other cases.

All four WAMs are partial, meaning that they only register some tasks. In Cases 1 and 4, only teaching-related tasks are registered, whereas the remaining workload is considered research time, besides 25 work hours per year allocated for administrative tasks. In Cases 2 and 3, the workload

	Case 1	*Case 2*	*Case 3*	*Case 4*
Workload unit	Work hours	Work hours	Work hours	K (originally referring to weekly contact hours)
Annual teaching workload requirement (associate professors)	986h	705-797h (depending on age)	80-484h (negotiated)	9K
Teaching workload allocation (examples)	Lecture: 4h per contact hour	Lecture: 4h per contact hour	2-4h per contact hour (negotiated)	Introductory course: 16.5K
	Workshop: 2.5h per contact hour	Seminar: 3h per contact hour		MA seminars: 2K
		Group work: 2h per contact hour		BA seminars: 3K
				Project seminars: 0.5-1K (depending on number of students)
Teaching a new course	0h	15h	Negotiated	0K
Redesigning a course	0h	25h	Negotiated	0K
Supervision of master's thesis	20h per student	30 ECTS thesis: 30h per student	10-30h per student	0.25K per student
		60 ECTS thesis: 60h per student		

	Case 1	*Case 2*	*Case 3*	*Case 4*
Other supervision (examples)	Collective supervision: 2.5h per contact hour	With assessment at the end of the semester: 1.5h per student	BA thesis: 2-15h per student	Often integrated in course workload allocation
	Individual supervision before exams: 1.5h per contact hour	With assessment integrated in the semester: 2.5h per student		
	Individual supervision after exams: 1.25h per contact hour			
Written examination	5 minutes per page up to 10 pages 4 minutes per page for 10 or more pages	Semester assignment: 1h per assignment	5-45 minutes per assignment	Integrated in course workload allocation
		4h written exam: 0.5h per assignment		
		3-day home exam: 0.75h per assignment		
Oral examination	1.5h per contact hour	0.75h per examination	N/A	Integrated in course workload allocation
Master's thesis examination	10h per thesis (30 ECTS)	6h per thesis (30 ECTS), 12h per thesis (60 ECTS)	4-8h per student (negotiated)	Included in master's thesis supervision
Course responsibility	0h (but sometimes negotiated)	10h per course	0h	0K

Table 2.
Overview of the calculative models of our four case WAMs.

for administrative tasks and for teaching is allocated separately, with the remaining workload considered research time. In all cases, teaching workload is defined a priori (either through norm-based standards or negotiation) rather than registered a posteriori as time spent on teaching tasks.

In the following analysis, we focus on teaching workload.

5. Calculative Practices and their Enactment of Collateral Pedagogies

Based on Table 2, it is clear that the calculative practices underpinning the four cases of WAMs differ in a number of ways. The calculative practices of achieving accuracy and objectivity in workload allocation, through which the models enact fairness and transparency, produce various collateral pedagogies. The analysis is organized according to three different categories of calculative practices: *measurement units*, *partition*, and *standardization*. These calculative practices produce different collateral pedagogies captured in the sub-headings of the ensuing sections.

5.1 Teaching as Time and Teaching as Task

The first of these calculative practices concerns **measurement units**. Here, we see two overall framings across the four models. Cases 1-3 frame teaching through standardized time units, measuring workload as work hours. The measurement unit of work hours establishes a workload ontology of *time*; that is, measuring, standardizing, and making tasks commensurate in minutes and hours according to how much time academic staff are expected to spend on them. Cases 1-3, which we may collectively name "work hour models", thus render workload seemingly equivalent to actual work time. This equivalence draws on, and reproduces, a long-standing modernist notion of time as existing in a standardized form, independent of the social world (Adam 2004). The use of standardized time – minutes and hours – as the unit of measurement for workload enacts objectivity and accuracy in the allocation and calculation of workload by drawing on this notion of time. Cases 1 and 2 include standards for a larger variety of categories of tasks than Case 3, and thus a more finely determined model as a basis for achieving mechanical objectivity (Daston and Galison 2007) in the allocation of work. Here time is a unit of measurement with a very fine granularity, down to minutes. The finely granulated framing of work enacts precise measurement as an achievable ideal.

While the workload unit of time thus serves as a means of achieving an objective and accurate workload allocation, it also enacts a collateral pedagogy where time is considered a main attribute of teaching. In Cases 1 and 2, the number of weekly contact hours constitute a standard that programs are required to live up to, as indicated by a head of section:

> The documents state that the students have a claim for 12 hours of teaching per week, right? (Interview with head of section)

Time becomes a key measure of teaching quality, and time furthermore becomes a measure of fairness towards students by providing a means of ensuring equality in supervision time per student or equality in total teaching time across programs.

In Case 4, the workload ontology is connected to tasks instead of time and measured through the "arbitrary" unit called "K", sometimes also referred to as "K-hours", which does not refer to any calculative unit beyond itself. As the head of school explains, the measurement unit of K was originally partially linked to time, but in a different way than the measurement unit of work hours:

> K originally represented a contact hour [per week] [*konfrontationstime*] and you... I mean, the equivalent was that you... every semester, you should teach two master's level seminars [with two contact hours of teaching per week], and each seminar then triggers 2K. And when it [the requirement] is 9K [per associate professor per year], that is because you then in addition had to supervise four master's theses. So that was the main idea.
> (Quote from interview with head of school, Case 4)

As the quote shows, K was originally connected to time in terms of contact hours as the most important definition, even though one K was also considered approximately equivalent to 100 work hours as a rule of thumb. While this framing reproduces time as standardized, K has over the years developed into an arbitrary or abstract unit of measurement that is no longer directly connected to contact hours, or work hours for that matter. This is for example illustrated by a course including 3 hours of lectures and 2 hours of exercises per week that triggers 8K, because a certain number of K covering the supervision and examination of many students has been added up to provide a better approximation of the course workload. The measurement unit of K frames workload in relation to tasks rather than in relation to the number of work hours staff are expected to use to perform the task, thereby framing the task of teaching on its own terms instead of via a standard measure. This workload ontology enacts teaching as a composite task, not defined in terms of time to the same extent as Cases 1-3.

The measurement unit in Case 4 is framed much more loosely than the work hour models since the unit of work hours constitutes a much more finely granulated unit of measurement than K. As indicated above, one K was originally supposed to be equivalent to the rough unit of one hundred work hours. In addition, the K model breaks down tasks to a quarter of a K as a minimum, while work hours are sometimes broken down to minutes, as we see in Case 1 where written exams are allocated 4-5 minutes of workload per page, or Case 3 where written exams receive between 5 and 45 minutes of workload per exam. The rough granularity of the K model also has an impact on the following calculative practices following from it.

5.2 Teaching as Partitioned and Teaching as Integrated

A second difference between the calculative practices concerns the **partition of tasks**. In Cases 1-3, tasks are partitioned into teaching, supervision, and exams, and each of these categories further partitioned into various *types* of teaching, supervision, and examination. For example, Cases 1 and 2 distinguish between different types of teaching, such as lectures, seminars, and workshops, as we for example see in the following excerpt from the workload agreement in Case 1:

> The forms of teaching and learning used at [the named faculty] are and should be diverse and demand various levels and types of preparation. In order to best support the quality of the

> programs and simultaneously safeguard the workload of the staff, different standard types of teaching (Types 1 and 2) [...] with associated different preparation norms are defined. (Internal document: "Workload agreement", Case 1)

Equally, supervision is in Case 1 partitioned into different types of supervision and broken down to single contact hours, while in Cases 2 and 3 (and in the category of master's thesis supervision in all four cases) it is broken down to individual students. The partition into small units entails a fragmentation of teaching, which is configured as made up of small building blocks that can be combined in a number of ways. This calculative practice distinguishes between different teaching tasks, such as evaluation, supervision, or lecturing, yet makes them commensurable (Espeland and Stevens 1998) and thus highly interchangeable by measuring all of them in units of time. The fine granularity and partition of tasks makes them combinable and, in principle, flexible to manage.

The partition of teaching into various categories furthermore constitutes a framework for how to think and design teaching in the form of a number of mutually exclusive types of teaching. Cases 1 and 2 both include a category for "lecturing" as well as categories of "seminar" and "group work" (Case 2), or simply "workshop" (Case 1). In Case 1, the categories imply that teachers predominantly teach in the format of lecturing. In Case 2, the different categories reflect different types of teaching as well as different sizes of student groups:

> Lectures are often more like one-way communication to a larger group of students, right? [...] That needs to be prepared, and it is assumed that the preparation of such a monologue is a bit more comprehensive, so therefore the rate is a bit higher. When it comes to seminars, these often involve smaller groups of students and a more interactive form of teaching that is thought to demand less preparation, and therefore this rate is lower. [...] And group work is lessons where an academic in a sense just leads student activity that requires a minimal preparation. (Interview with head of teaching, Case 2)

Thus, all teaching is framed according to this handful of preformatted categories in order to be comprehensible and calculable and to fit the models. The implication is that other kinds of teaching are *erased from the repertoire* of this collateral pedagogy. For example, the categories only include teaching in which all students and the teacher are present at the same time in the same room, doing the same activity. For one head of teaching, the limited repertoire of teaching formats became evident during the Covid-19 pandemic, when another format of teaching was suddenly required:

> In particular, we experienced during the pandemic that [the WAM] did not have categories for all types of teaching, including digital teaching and stuff like that [...] If you were to conduct a digital lecture, then you obviously had to prepare the content, but the teacher then also had to record the lecture, and some had digital skills at a high level and others maybe had a low level of digital skills... so that was the discussion: How many hours should be registered for a recorded lecture, for example?
> (Interview with head of teaching, Case 2)

As this head of teaching explains, the pandemic suddenly required academics to conduct online teaching, such as recorded lectures, making the WAMs' existing categories somewhat problematic. In the cases we analyze here, teaching workload was still allocated according to the existing categories rather than questioned and readjusted to suit the changing conditions of the pandemic. Regardless, the fragmentation of teaching not only concerns its partition into small tasks, but also a collateral pedagogy where different activities need to take place at different times. Overall, teaching is made to fit the model, not vice versa, even under conditions that expose its limits.

In turn, the point-based model in Case 4 enacts a collateral pedagogy of integrated teaching, as well as the inseparability of teaching, supervision, and examination. The points allocated for various teaching tasks take into account the particularity of courses, thus entangling teaching tasks with teaching content – and to some extent also students' progression. Teaching is still fragmented, but at a much coarser level of individual courses. Teaching is also still preformatted, but not as a result of the WAM – there are a range of other practices, including local traditions, national regulations, and even room booking systems, that frame teaching in terms of various types and volumes.

5.3 Decontextualized and Situated Teaching

Finally, the four WAMs perform different but overlapping kinds of **standardization and decontextualization of teaching** in their process of translating workload into calculative units. First, Cases 1, 2, and 4 standardize workload irrespective of who conducts the teaching (including their level of experience and whether they have taught the course before) and of the context of teaching and supervision (including the number of students and who the students are). This standardization is particularly promoted in Case 1, where the standards of, for example, workload per feedback hour or workload per written exam page are compatible with many different types of feedback and examination. Second, Cases 1 and 2 standardize workload irrespective of the content of the teaching (including the level of the program and the character of the knowledge taught). These standards are the same for all, no matter who conducts the teaching, most likely as a means of achieving an objective and thus fair workload allocation. The only difference that is taken into account is the type of teaching, with lectures, workshops or seminars, and group work corresponding to different allocations of work hours.

The decontextualization of teaching, especially in terms of students and content as found in Cases 1 and 2, has the potential to enact particular collateral pedagogies. The calculative practices of standardization imply that it becomes impossible to accommodate students or teaching content that might be considered more demanding in regular programs. Only special circumstances allow for such changes to be made:

> When we developed a new master's degree program, we had to address some challenges related to dropout, right, and also a lack of a sense of belonging [among students enrolled in] the program, and the social part – the team spirit... Then we relatively quickly received this extra funding for the program, which was funding given to two or three programs, I believe, which were then supposed to be enhanced master's programs. And then we had really good

> resources... We were able to travel and have a 2-day seminar with the students with an overnight stay. And also to monitor students more closely – mentoring hours, actually. Plus, we had a principle about co-teaching. (Interview with teacher, Case 2)

As illustrated by the quote, there needs to be special circumstances (i.e., the categorization as an "enhanced program") for extra resources, such as work hours for mentoring or the presence of two teachers during all teaching activities, to be made available.

Case 4 in many cases particularizes workload as defined in relation to each individual course, while abstaining from standardizing types of teaching.

Case 3 differs from these modes of standardization by allowing the model to be adapted to each individual staff member, depending on their specific circumstances and priorities, as well as the nature of the teaching conducted. As stated in the WAM:

> Work time can be flexibly allocated to different tasks and activities within an employee's primary sphere of responsibility. (Internal document: "Guidelines for preparing annual work plans", Case 3)

While the reason for this adaptability was to develop a model that could accommodate different traditions during an organizational merger process, it resulted in the introduction of intervals, leaving the allocation of workload open to negotiation and thus individual assessment and decision-making to ensure fairness appropriate to the specific situation. Thus, while drawing on the objectified notion of minutes and hours, and on the accuracy achieved through a fine granularity and the partition of tasks, Case 3 also situates and adapts workload allocation to specific situations as a premise for achieving an accurate and realistic allocation of workload hours, quite contrary to the standardization taking place in Cases 1 and 2.

6. Conclusions

In our study of four WAMs, we chose to investigate their performative effects, drawing on the notions of explicit and collateral realities (Law 2012). All the WAMs that we studied either refer directly or indirectly to transparency and fairness in official descriptions of their purpose and were acknowledged by several of our informants for their positive functions in the allocation of work, including their role in promoting equity by breaking down previous power structures in academia where senior staff were able to evade teaching tasks through delegation to junior colleagues. A number of informants – including those acknowledging the positive functions of the WAMs – furthermore highlighted how WAMs promoted certain inequalities in workload allocation. For example, different groups of staff end up spending different proportions of their working hours to "earn" the same number of workload hours. In addition, all informants questioned the standard rates of workload allocation in terms of their correspondence to reality. Academic staff and scholars alike thus critiqued the WAMs according to their professed core task of a fair and transparent allocation of workload – a critique emanating from and framed by the promises made in their name and the explicit realities that WAMs seek to enact.

Furthermore, an innumerable number of collateral realities are performed. Many of these realities are familiar and become re-inscribed and reproduced in the WAM as well as in other practices along the way. One example in our analysis is the standardized measurement of time in minutes, hours, days, and years. Another example is the standard rules for calculation via addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. These kinds of collateral realities encompass the foundations for workload calculations, ensuring they make sense to their producers and users, and they are the premise for the enacted reality of quantified academic labor.

Meanwhile, the analysis of four WAMs has also shown how various calculative practices enact different collateral pedagogies. Through their fine granularity and standardization and commensuration of tasks, the work hour models (particularly in Cases 1 and 2) enact teaching as flexible and combinable, and thereby optimizable. Teaching thus becomes a standardized/able enterprise disconnected from its context and content by way of standardized formats and quantities, instead of an open process that takes the students, the particularities of the course, or teachers' professional backgrounds and experience into consideration. Any differences between academic subjects or student progression are rendered irrelevant when considering the kind of teaching that is required. In turn, the points-based model using K (Case 4) enacts teaching as an integrated enterprise, adaptable to shifting students and circumstances, whereas the interval-based model (Case 3) allows for adaptation at the level of the individual teacher. In this sense, instruments like WAMs are overtly political.

In this paper, we sought to approach WAMs as an issue of ontological politics. We argue that the focus on calculative practices and the collateral realities they produce enables us to examine both the realities that are performed by the administrative instruments and – in parallel – the realities that get undone in the process. Our comparative approach, combined with the perspective of ontological politics, encourages us to remember that the realities of academia could be different and that, as researchers and academics, we should keep asking which alternative realities we want to produce – and through which practices that could become possible.

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