

Towson University Office of Academic Affairs
Faculty Member Course Time and Effort Buyout Guidelines

Towson University encourages faculty to seek external grants in support of their research or their extended teaching and service activities. External support may include funding to provide faculty members with blocks of time to advance their projects in certain cases. These guidelines apply to external funding that supports the release of a faculty member from one or more course units of teaching by "buying out" his or her time and effort. Course buyouts are distinct from other forms of supplemental faculty compensation (example: summer salary) that are not addressed here.

Towson University will calculate the cost of full buyout of regular semester course units on the basis of an eight (8) course annual teaching load. A one course (3 credit hour) buyout is equivalent to 1/8 (12.5%) of a faculty member's academic year salary and benefits. When an externally funded project requires allocation of faculty time and effort that is equivalent to a one course teaching load the project budget should reflect the 12.5% of academic year salary support and the associated benefits.

In some cases granting agencies may have specific restrictions that limit the funding available to release faculty from normal responsibilities. In other cases the circumstances associated with a specific grants program and a specific project may make it desirable to request a lower level of salary support to fund other items in the proposed budget. In these cases the department chair and the dean may jointly agree to accept a level for buyout that is lower than 12.5% for one course unit so long as the funding provided clearly exceeds all costs of replacement. Such agreements for less than full funding of a buyout at 12.5% will always be considered on a case by case basis.

Funds generated by a buyout will be distributed as follows.

(A) The first priority is to provide for high-quality replacement of any teaching unit lost through the buyout, normally through the hiring of an adjunct faculty member. Funds equal to the cost of the replacement unit, inclusive of fringe benefits, will be transferred from the grant funds to the Provost's Budget Office as the first claim on buyout funding.

(B) Funds not required to cover the costs of replacement will be transferred to the College associated with the faculty member receiving the buyout as follows:

1. The Dean of each College will determine the further distribution of the funds in keeping with the expectation that funds generated through faculty research will be used to promote and support additional faculty research and development.
2. Funds resulting from externally-funded faculty releases shall be deposited in college revolving self-support accounts.

Deans shall include a summary of how these funds have been allocated during the current fiscal year with their request for the next fiscal year. Receipt of future funding will be dependent upon receipt of previous year's report demonstrating adherence to guidelines. The Vice Provost will ensure that deans, chairs, and faculty are aware of these guidelines on an annual basis.

A course buyout is not complete until the required time and effort report identifying the source of funds and verifying that the grant work was carried out is submitted to the Office of Sponsored Programs.

Approved by Deans' Council 09-30-2014

Approved by Provost 04-01-2015