

College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources Policy on Use of Funds to Temporarily Replace Faculty Member Course Instruction

Approved by Faculty Advisory Council: March 9, 2007

The College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources (CASNR) prepares professional leaders in the food, agriculture, and natural resource sciences through its strong undergraduate and graduate programs. CASNR recognizes that a balance of teaching, research, extension education and service are interrelated goals for all faculty, and are core components of our Land Grant Mission. To accomplish our mission, our faculty may seek external funds to pursue endeavors that are significant and beneficial to a variety of internal and outside stakeholders including our students.

The College is committed to maintaining the quality of our course offerings for our students. Equally important is the responsibility of the program faculty to approve and the unit administrator to assign course instructors to ensure the course quality. The purpose of this buyout policy is not to encourage course buyouts; rather, to assist the faculty member, their department, and the College in determining appropriate arrangements and contingencies for a faculty member who may choose to pursue opportunities that require a temporary leave from instructional responsibilities. As a college, we remain committed and dedicated to an educational experience that prepares our students intellectually to meet the challenges of their era. As a result, CASNR sets forth the following policies governing buyout of instructional time.

The College encourages faculty to pursue new research, educational, extension and service opportunities and to obtain funding to support those opportunities, as long as base faculty responsibilities continue to be fulfilled without a noticeable decline in quality. One avenue that is employed to temporarily free up time for a faculty member to take on such opportunities is to 'buy out' a portion of the faculty member's responsibilities toward fulfilling his or her appointed assignment. This policy specifically addresses requests to reduce a faculty member's teaching responsibilities.

While freeing up faculty time to complete new projects advances the research and other missions of the University, buying out of instructional duties is not a faculty right and can only be done with the approval of the department head/chair (unit leader) and the Dean. The following guidelines will be followed to protect the interests of the College and its students.

Applicability:

- This policy applies to all situations where funds are to be used to temporarily reduce an individual faculty member's teaching responsibilities, with the exception of faculty leaves (sabbaticals) and other situations that are jointly agreed upon by both the Dean and the head/chair of the affected unit.
- Faculty members having a CASNR teaching appointment are expected to teach at least one course on an annual or biannual basis and may not use funds to buy out the teaching of all of their courses.

- Buyout funds should not be used to reduce the FTE of a faculty member. Buyouts that are expected to last for more than 3 years and requests to buy out faculty members' entire teaching loads need to be addressed through changes in appointments.

Planning Needs:

- Prospective buyouts of course instruction need to be considered and developed as early as possible, preferably during proposal development.
- This policy requires that all proposed activities support the mission and priorities of the University.
- Proposals that will generate funding to support temporary replacement of a portion of a faculty member's responsibilities toward fulfilling his or her appointed assignment should include language documenting how the projects will enhance investigator teaching capabilities and/or future education of students.
- At the time a proposal is developed, the PI (or affected faculty member) must negotiate the arrangements for any buyouts with the head/chair of the department (or the appropriate unit leader). Since programmatic needs can change between the submission of a proposal and the receipt of funding, the head/chair will retain the right to modify the arrangement so as to be able to meet departmental obligations, with approval by the Dean.

Funding requirements:

- Buyout funds must provide at least 1/6 of a faculty member's annual salary for each three credit-hour course which is to be replaced.
- No faculty member will be allowed to buy out of instruction if it will compromise the ability of the department to deliver its instructional program. It is the responsibility of the department to ensure that its teaching needs can be met with its share of the funds provided by the buyout.

Replacement instruction:

- The replacement instructor needs to be competent to teach the course. It is the responsibility of the department/unit head, in collaboration with the faculty member who is buying out instruction time, to identify replacement instructor candidates.
- Feedback on the proposed candidate(s) must be solicited from the departmental/unit committee having oversight of program courses and instruction, and at least 1 week must be provided for the committee to consider replacement instructor candidates. A summary of this feedback must be provided to the Dean prior to employment of the replacement instructor.

The replacement instructor must be provided adequate time to prepare for teaching the course. A minimum of two weeks of preparation time must be available before classes begin.