
Faculty Salary Savings and Course Buyout Policy

Faculty Salary Savings

Effective September 1, 2014, the College of Geosciences is implementing the budget policy relating to Faculty Salary Savings as follows:

- All faculty salary savings generated will automatically revert and be retained at the College level. This includes faculty salary savings and base budgets generated from vacated positions as well as salary savings generated when more than 12 months of support generated through contracts, grants, and other support.
- There will be no retrieval of administrative staff salary lines that are allocated at a set amount per department during the budget process.
- Faculty salary savings generated from more than 12 months of salary support will be managed in a separate pool by department.
- Faculty salary savings accounts will be monitored. Balances will be recovered by the college after two years. This applies to existing balances as well as new salary savings awarded to faculty members.
- To assist departments and programs in covering teaching obligations, the College may provide the department or program with funds to cover replacement teaching for the number of courses taught by a departing faculty member in the previous academic year or from the salary savings generated by faculty from grants and contracts. In all cases a request must be made to the dean through the department head for the funds explaining the teaching need and how it will be met. Departments may submit requests for the use of these funds for projects that promise to enhance the strategic development of the department and/or College.
- Faculty members may request support from the faculty salary savings pool to assist with bridge funding for research personnel, summer salary support, and other support needs that cannot be met through other faculty member resources. Requests for funds must be made through their department heads to the dean. The request should outline the need and the benefits of supporting the request.
- Normally the College will expect to retain at least 50% of all annual salary savings in order to support teaching and research initiatives across the college.
- Faculty members who leave the campus under an IPA agreement for a period of time will have 20% of their salary savings retained and reserved in an account within the Dean's Office. The balance of the salary savings realized from the faculty absence will be returned to the faculty salary savings pool as described above and will be used to cover teaching needs during this period of time. When the faculty member returns from their IPA hiatus, the Dean will use this IPA 20% reserved pool of savings to cover the costs associated with the reduced teaching loads and summer salaries, if necessary, to ensure a successful transition back to TAMU. Transitioning details shall be documented and approved through the Dean, Provost, and Dean of Faculties Office prior to the finalization of any IPA Agreements.

Exceptions to this policy may only be made by the dean.

Course Buyouts

Effective February 25, 2013, the College of Geosciences established a college policy for all Geosciences departments as it relates to course buyouts.

The buyout rate for a single course is 16.66% (1/6 or 1.5 months) of the faculty member's 9-month salary. Externally funded research grants are approved at the department head level. Buyouts from other funding sources (E.g. endowments, faculty salary savings, or IDC) must be approved by the dean and requested in the form of a memo from the department head to the dean.

For purposes of the Course Buyout policy, Texas A&M programs and other award programs such as Intergovernmental Personnel Act (IPA) releases and Faculty Development Leave (FDL) awards are not considered course buyouts.

A faculty member buying out of a course during a semester is expected to remain involved in both undergraduate and graduate instruction. Any proposed course buyout that will leave a faculty member below the faculty workload requirement in a semester, as governed by Texas A&M University Rule 12.03.99.M1, System Policy 12.03, and the Texas Education Code Section 51.402 (b), will need to be approved by the dean.

All course buyout requests will be subject to the following criteria:

- Overall teaching needs of the department, as determined by the department head.
- No more than 14% (1/7) of a given department's total tenured and tenured-track faculty may be exempt from teaching during any given semester as a result of any program (FDL, IPA, course buyouts, etc.).

All approved course buy-outs will be documented in the faculty member's annual appointment letters. Any revisions to a faculty member's appointment throughout the year will result in a revised annual appointment letter.

Salary savings generated will automatically revert and be retained at the College level. In normal circumstances funds will be made available to cover replacement teaching needs created by approved course buyouts. Funds generated from course buyouts may also be made available for initiatives that further the department's strategic goals. In both cases, requests should be made from the department head to the dean via a budget request form that can be found at: <http://geobusiness.tamu.edu/budgeting>.

Exceptions to this policy may only be approved by the dean.