ALABAMA STATE UNIVERSITY

I. Title:

Externally Funded Course Release Policy

II. Policy Statement:

Retaining and promoting faculty at ASU hinges on a faculty member's ability to be an effective instructor, active scholar, and good organizational citizen. This policy establishes general provisions to cover externally funded instructional course releases for faculty who obtain grant funding. This policy applies to all full-time lecturers, tenure-track, and tenured faculty. This policy does not apply to temporary hires.

An Instructional Course Release permits a faculty member to have a reduced teaching load under their normal academic year appointment. In other words, the person is released from part of their teaching obligation while still being paid their regular full-time salary.

The purpose of Instructional Course Releases is to provide faculty members with time to undertake important activities such as scholarship, professional development, or other service for the College. This policy is specific to instructional course releases in exchange for externally funded sponsored-project research activities.

Instructional Course Releases do not relieve the faculty member from other responsibilities to the College such as advising, serving on committees, or participating in departmental business. Faculty members are expected to continue to be in residence and carry out their other duties during the term in which they have a course release. Therefore, the course release amount that will be charged to the Principal Investigator's grant will equal the percentage equivalent of one course based on the faculty members teaching load (e.g., 25-33.3% annually or 12.5-16.65% per semester). This amount will be used for all academic ranks (Assistant, Associate and/or Full Professor rank).

III. Scope:

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for requesting and administering externally-funded instructional releases. The guidelines are meant to provide general information and processes about externally-funded instructional releases as used by faculty.

IV. Effective Date:

This policy is effective upon official approval by the ASU Board of Trustees

V. Audience (Designated Responsibilities and Applicability of Policy on Externally Funded Course Releases):

All faculty, academic administrators, the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, and the Office of Academic Affairs.

VI. Definitions:

External funding to support a course release: A situation in which a faculty member obtains

salary funding from an external source (e.g., sponsored project) to facilitate a reduced teaching load and reallocation of time to an extramurally-funded project.

Instructional Course Release: A semester-long agreement for a full-time faculty member to have a reduced teaching load while being paid their normal academic salary.

VII. Policy Management:

Any concerns, violations, or disputes related to the policy for externally funded instructional course releases should be reported to the Office of Academic Affairs for clarification and resolution.

VIII. Procedures:

The following section describes eligibility for an externally funded instructional course release.

Sponsored-Project Research Activities (e.g., external funding to support a course release)
Faculty members may request to use external funding to support a course release in order to work on a sponsored grant. Faculty members who serve as the Principal Investigator on funded projects may request a course release for any academic year in which any single grant has been funded for the current year or corresponding year. The cost of one course release is a calculated percentage of faculty members academic salary. The released funds will, if needed, be used to support a replacement instructor for the course that the faculty member would have otherwise taught. This amount cannot be included as in-kind donations. In effect, the grant "buys" the faculty member's released time so the equivalent amount of effort can be spent working on the grant.

A. Guidelines for obtaining external funding to support course release(s)

   a. Faculty members may request to use external funding to substitute a portion of teaching responsibilities dependent on the availability of teaching support, as determined by the Department Chair and/or immediate supervisor (e.g., Dean).
   b. External funding for pursuit of external personal or business interests not related to the mission of the College shall not be granted.
   c. A portion of the external funding amount allotted to support course release(s) is expected to be used for funding an alternative source to teach the released course(s) and related instructional expenses.
   d. Receiving external funding to support a course release does not release faculty members from performing their service obligations on behalf of the College or the faculty member's school/department.
   e. If the granting agency has its own specific formula for determining how to calculate external funding specific to a course release, the Dean may allow a faculty member(s) associated with the grant to fund one course at the granting agency's rate, with Principal Investigator approval.

B. Requesting external funding to support course release(s)

Faculty shall make requests to use external funding to support a course release to the Department Chair and/or Dean or Director of Libraries, at the time of proposal development and before proposal submission. Faculty who receive grant funding without prior approval for the use of the funds to support course release(s) are subject to forfeiting course releases.

The request should include:

- the number of units requested and the anticipated semester(s) in which use of the external funds to support the course release are requested;
- the size and scope of work to be conducted;
- rationale as to why a course release is necessary to complete the scope of work;
- the sponsor providing funding.

After conferring with the Department Chair and/or Dean, the Provost grants the final approval for use of external funds to support the course release. Approval is given on condition that a grant award is made and the course release time has been budgeted according to procedures.

The faculty member shall work with the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs to budget the course equivalent funding in the proposal to an external sponsor. The faculty member should budget for the appropriate amount and fringe to be charged to the grant when the course release is received.

C. Administration of Instructional Course Releases

Instructional Course Releases are administered and monitored by the Deans and College officials, and monitored with final approval granted by the Provost's Office.

A full-time faculty member receiving an Instructional Course Release may not:

1. accept additional or "overload" teaching assignments for additional compensation. Under these circumstances, the Instructional Course Release should be deferred;
2. receive stipends in lieu of the Instructional Course Release(s);

Unless otherwise specified, Instructional Course Releases may be taken in increments that do not adversely affect the ability of the department or school to deliver their curriculum.

Document History
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