The expectations for tenure-eligible and tenured (i.e. ordinary) faculty are that they will teach a full load of courses, typically 3-3, while continuing to conduct scholarly activity and service. A course release is when a faculty member is permitted 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. Course release should not be confused with professional leave, which occurs when a faculty member is released from all teaching, scholarship and service opportunities to pursue a scholarly activity or to take a fellowship. The College recognizes there may be circumstances where an exceptionally large piece of scholarly or administrative work necessitates a reduction in workload to accomplish the activity.

**Requesting a course release for sponsored research and scholarly activity:**

Faculty members may request a course release in order to concentrate their efforts on grant-supported scholarship. The request should be made in writing via e-mail to the department chair/program director, school dean and Provost & Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs at the time of proposal development. The detailed request should include: 1) the size and scope of work to be conducted and rationale as to why a course release is necessary to complete the scope of work; 2) the sponsor which will provide funding, and; 3) the anticipated semester(s) in which a course release is requested.

After conferring with the department chair/program director and school dean, the approval for course release is made by the Provost & Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs. The approval is made on condition that the release will be granted if an award is made and the course release time has been budgeted according to the course buy-out procedures. The faculty member works with the Office of Sponsored Research & Programs to budget for a course “buy out” in the proposal to an external sponsor.

**Limitations:**

- Normally, the maximum number of courses a faculty member may request release from teaching for the purpose of conducting sponsored scholarly work is one per academic year. In no case may a faculty member be released from more than two courses per academic year (one per academic semester) for the purpose of grant-related scholarship.

- A faculty member who receives a course release may not receive concomitant overload pay.

When the above approvals are followed, departments/programs may be authorized to hire special lecturers through the normal hiring process for replacement purposes.

**Course Buy-Out Procedures**

A “buy-out” means that a course release has been given so the faculty member can work on a sponsored grant. The corresponding percentage of the person’s appointment is charged directly to the grant account during the term of the buy-out. In effect, the grant “buys” the faculty member’s released time by paying for that portion of his/her salary so that the equivalent amount of effort can be spent working on the grant. Standard practice for determining the cost of a course release, and a method consonant with federal grants, is to calculate the cost
based on a percentage of the faculty member’s salary (the individual for whom the course is bought out) rather than the replacement cost for the course.

**Basic definition of faculty work profile for the purpose of sponsored research course buy out:**

60% Teaching

40% Research and Service

At a standard load of 6 courses per academic year, one course equals 10%

**Calculation Example:**

For a course buy-out funded by an external grant or contract, the buyout is 10 percent of the base academic-year salary plus fringe benefits. For example, a faculty member with a base salary of $65,000 would budget as follows:

\[
\text{AY salary} \times .10 = \text{cost for one course buy-out}
\]

For example, a faculty member with a base salary of $65,000 would budget as follows:

\[
\text{AY salary} \times .10 = \$6,500 + \text{fringe benefits at 34%} = \$8,710 \text{ (cost for one course buy-out)}
\]

**Post Award Procedures:**

When course release has been approved and course buy out is budgeted and approved by the external sponsor, the external grant will be charged a percentage of the faculty member’s time and associated fringe benefits. Faculty must certify through the College’s time and effort reporting procedures that time charged is an accurate and a reasonable estimation of time devoted to the sponsored activity.