



OFFICE OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

University of New Mexico

Office for Academic Personnel
Guidance
course buyout, course release

Full-time (tenure-track, tenured, lecturers) faculty members of the University generally have significant responsibilities in fulfilling its teaching mission. To appropriately fulfill the University's research and service missions, however, reductions in teaching responsibilities are sometimes warranted. These reductions in teaching responsibilities may be via a course buyout or a course release (sometimes referred to as course reassignments). Full-time faculty may not buy out or seek a release of teaching responsibilities if it will *severely* impact the ability of the department to deliver its instructional program, as determined by the department chair. Course buyouts or course releases for pursuit of external personal or business interests not related to the mission of the University shall not be granted. Course buyouts and course releases do not release faculty members from performing other components of their workload obligations.

A course buyout applies when a faculty member's teaching load is reduced to work on an externally funded project. Course buyouts are supported by external grant/contract/fellowship funds and meant to 'buy' a faculty member's time by paying for a portion of their salary so that the equivalent amount of effort (%) can be spent working on the funded project. The corresponding percentage of the faculty member's appointment is directly charged (accounted for) to the grant/contract/fellowship index (budget) during the semester of the buyout. Course buyouts are based on a faculty member's percentage of effort (FTE) dedicated to the sponsored project and in accordance with the external funders' policies and the university's contract/grant with the external funding agency.

At the time a proposal for a sponsored project is developed, the faculty member must negotiate the arrangement for course buyout with the department chair. It is the responsibility of the department chair to ensure that teaching needs can be met with the remaining faculty members or with temporary faculty hired during the term of the faculty member's buyout. Buyout of all teaching in an academic year is not appropriate except in rare circumstances.

A course release applies when a faculty member's teaching load is reduced, usually through an internal application or appointment process, to undertake important activities such as scholarship (e.g., WeR1 FaST) or administrative (e.g., chair of department) or service duties (e.g., Faculty Senate President) or to participate in some professional development programs (e.g., WeR1 LIFT). A course release permits a faculty member to have a reduced teaching load under their normal academic year appointment. Course releases may be funded from internal – University of New Mexico – sources. Schools and colleges are expected to charge the internal source the current TPT pay rate to hire replacement teaching that will enable the faculty member to participate in the specified activity. The value of the course release is consistent with the course replacement cost, per the TPT pay rate published on oap.unm.edu. If a course release is not necessary, funds will not be transferred to the department.