

University of North Carolina at Greensboro

College of Arts and Sciences

Policies on Research Assignments, Fellowships, and Off-campus Assignments

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## A. Overview

- The UNCG College of Arts & Sciences (CAS) supports faculty engagement in a broad range of research, scholarly, and creative activities, as well as faculty pursuit of extramural funding for these activities. This support includes promoting faculty's research and scholarship programs by providing opportunities to receive Research Assignments and Off-Campus Assignments.
- This document describes CAS policies regarding faculty eligibility for fellowships, procedures for applying for fellowships, and the policies regarding supplemental salary support, research assignments and off-campus assignments. CAS recognizes that fellowships, off-campus assignments, and research assignments are valued accomplishments and essential opportunities for pursuing research and scholarship in many fields.
- Fellowships do, however, present an economic cost to CAS and a potential challenge to course staffing in departments and programs. In order for the CAS to maintain a vital and ongoing program of support for fellowship recipients, it is essential that faculty familiarize themselves with these policies, consult with their department head/program director and the CAS Associate Dean for Research in advance regarding planned applications, and follow the procedures described below.

## B. Definitions

**Grant** – A grant is a financial award that is used to fund research, scholarship, and creative activity. Grant funds may be used for a variety of purposes including salary support for the principal investigator (PI) and members of the research team, participant payment, equipment costs, supplies, and travel expenses. Pending department and college approval, faculty members who have grants may use the funding to obtain release from some of their teaching or service duties. Typically, CAS does not provide matching funds for grants.

**Fellowship** – A fellowship is a financial award that is primarily used to allow faculty to devote themselves full-time to research, scholarship, and/or creative activities for a set period of time, typically for one semester or a full academic year. Faculty who receive such awards are often granted an off-campus assignment for the period of the award. In many cases, CAS will provide a salary supplement sufficient to allow the faculty member to remain on full salary during the period of the leave, provided that all the requirements of this policy are met.

**Off-Campus Assignment** – An Off-Campus Assignment is a period of time, either one semester or one year, that provides release time from teaching and service duties during the period of a fellowship. The funding agency providing the funds must require that this release be provided as a condition of the award – an off-campus assignment cannot be requested simply because one receives external funding.

**Junior (Pre-Tenure) Off-Campus Assignment (JOCA)** – A Junior Off-Campus Assignment (JOCA) is a non-competitive, one-semester release from teaching and service, given to tenure-track faculty after reappointment to a second probationary term (faculty receive full salary during this period). Receipt of a JOCA is contingent on the faculty member's submitting an acceptable plan of work, and the plan being approved by their Department Head/Director.

**Research Assignment (for Tenured faculty)** – As described in the guidelines set by the Provost (see [here](#)), the University is committed to the advancement of research and creative scholarly activity. The Research Assignment program rewards tenured faculty members who have demonstrated distinguished contributions to the University through a competitively-won award of either one semester at full salary or two semesters at half salary during which the faculty member focuses on the advancement or completion of scholarly activities. The one semester assignment may also be combined with a second semester of an externally-funded off-campus assignment, to allow for a year at full pay. This can be applied for / awarded every five years.

**Course Buyout** – A Course Buyout is when external funds “buy” a faculty member's released time by paying for a portion of their salary so that the equivalent amount of effort (%) can be spent working on the externally-funded project. A buyout situation applies when a faculty member is granted a course release in order to accommodate a faculty member's work on an externally funded project. The corresponding percentage of the faculty's appointment is directly charged (accounted for) to the grant account (budget) during the term of the buyout.

### C. Junior Off-Campus Assignments (JOCAs)

Recognizing that the opportunity for an off-campus assignment prior to tenure is valuable for faculty recruitment and retention and contributes to a faculty member's research, scholarship, and creative productivity both prior to and immediately following tenure, the College of Arts & Sciences at UNC Greensboro expects to award qualified tenure-track faculty a one-semester off-campus assignment before tenure.

#### Who:

1. This policy applies only to faculty with appointments as tenure-track Assistant Professors in the College of Arts & Sciences. It does not apply to Professional-track faculty, Associate Professors (whether hired with or without tenure), or Professors. Faculty receiving an initial appointment as Instructor become eligible under the terms of this policy only upon reappointment as Assistant Professor.

2. In the case of faculty with a joint appointment in another academic unit, the Dean of the College will consult with the Dean of the other unit to determine the applicability of this policy as part of planning for the search.

3. Faculty whose reappointment to a second probationary term is denied are not eligible for a JOCA.

#### What:

4. During this assignment, the faculty member will be relieved of all teaching and service obligations. It is the faculty member's responsibility to notify the Department Head/Program Director about any continuing obligations during the period of the assignment, such as supervision of student research projects, so that suitable arrangements can be made. As far as possible, the department is expected to make its own arrangements to cover the loss of the recipient's teaching and other departmental contributions during the period of the assignment.

#### When:

5. The JOCA will be granted during the academic year following approval of the faculty member's reappointment to a second probationary term by the Chancellor (see timeline, below). Under exceptional circumstances, the Department Head/Program Director may recommend to the Dean that the assignment be scheduled at a different time; such a recommendation must be submitted to the Dean, reasonably in advance of the scheduled JOCA, in writing, and establish a compelling case for deviating from the policy.

6. In the case of faculty who are hired with credit toward tenure on the basis of previous experience, the Dean will consult with the Department Head/Program Director when the offer of employment is made to determine the date at which the faculty member will become eligible for a research assignment under this policy.

#### How:

7. Faculty, in consultation with their Department Head/Program Director, must prepare a plan of work for the period of the assignment as part of preparing for the reappointment review (faculty with joint appointments should consult with both Department Heads/Program Directors). The plan of work must be endorsed by the Department Head/Program Director and sent to the Dean as part of the recommendation for reappointment.

**Post-assignment:**

8. Within 60 days of completing the assignment, faculty must submit to their Department Head/Program Director (with a copy to the Dean) a brief report describing the work undertaken and the progress accomplished.

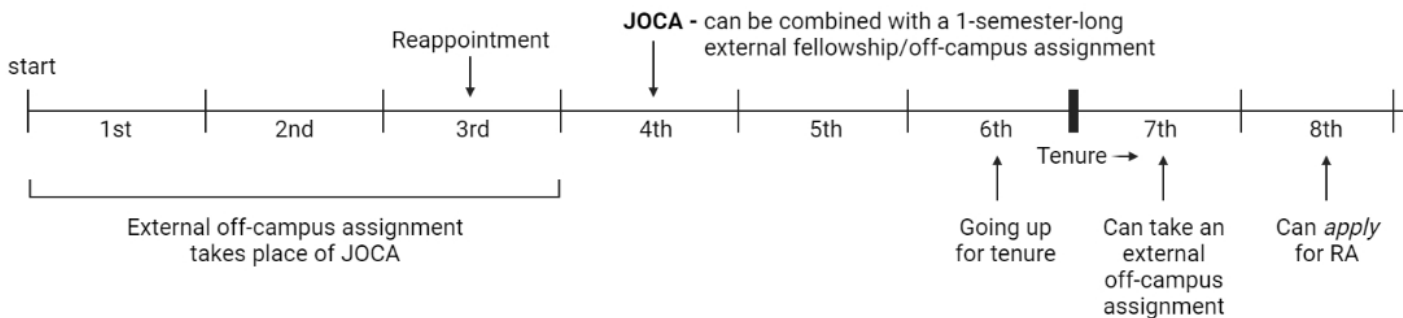
9. As a condition of accepting a JOCA, the faculty member must agree to return their position at UNCG for at least twice the length of time that the faculty member was the JOCA, or be required to repay the salary received during the JOCA.

10. Faculty who accept a JOCA under this policy must wait four years before they are eligible for the University's program of Research Assignments for tenured faculty (see timeline, below); that is: eight semesters must elapse between the end of a JOCA under this policy and the start of a Research Assignment under the policy for tenured faculty.

**Ineligibility for a JOCA:**

11. If a faculty member is granted an off-campus assignment to accept an externally funded fellowship or similar opportunity prior to reappointment, they will not also be granted a JOCA under this policy. The rationale is that faculty need to establish a satisfactory record of teaching and service, in addition to their research, scholarship, and/or creative activities.

Timeline (years):



*Approved, September 24, 2008*

*Revised, August 11, 2021*

## D. Research Assignments

As described in the guidelines set by the Provost, the University is committed to the advancement of research and creative scholarly activity. The Research Assignment program rewards tenured faculty members who have demonstrated distinguished contributions to the University through the award of either one semester at full salary or two semesters at half salary during which the faculty member focuses on the advancement or completion of scholarly activities. The one semester assignment may also be combined with a second semester of an externally-funded off-campus assignment, to allow for a year at full pay.

The Provost's guidelines (available [here](#)) describe faculty eligibility, requirements during and upon completion of the research assignment, salary support from extramural funding during the research assignment, impact on employment, and fringe benefits during the assignment. It is important to understand that UNCG's Research Assignment is not a sabbatical or an automatic senior leave. It is a competitive award and applications are reviewed on their merits using criteria described below. The Dean and the review panel recognize and value the diversity of research, scholarship, and creative activity in the College of Arts & Sciences. Therefore, the application and review processes are designed to provide equal competitive advantage to proposals from faculty members in all of the domains of scholarship in the College, including arts, humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences. All funding to support Research Assignments for College faculty is provided by the College. No financial support is provided by the University.

The remainder of this section describes the College of Arts & Sciences' policy on the submission and review of applications for research assignments.

1. **Timeline** – This section provides a typical timeline for the submission and review of research assignment applications. Applicants should consult specific deadlines provided in the annual announcements.

June/July – The Provost announces the annual research assignment program; this call will be forwarded to faculty by the Dean's office

Late August – Completed research assignment applications must be submitted to the applicant's department head/program director (please see the Dean's call for applications for submission instructions)

Mid-September – Completed research assignment applications and department head recommendation letters are due to the Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences

Mid-October – Recommendations of the College Research Assignment review committee are due to the Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences

Early November – The Dean's recommendations for research assignments are due to the Provost

Mid-Late November – Applicants are notified

## 2. Research Assignment Application

A completed application includes a signed cover page, project description, and curriculum vitae. This may be routed via the online InfoReady Review submission platform (see the call for applications).

**The project description should not exceed four single-spaced pages. It must include clear descriptions of each of the following, written in jargon-free language that can be understood by non-specialists:**

- a) A description of the research, scholarship, and/or creative activity that will be conducted during the proposed research assignment – if appropriate, this should include description of any novel aspects of the research design or method.
- b) The significance of the work and the contribution it will make to the applicant's program and discipline.
- c) The expected research, scholarly, or creative products that will result from the research assignment (e.g., book draft, creative project, manuscripts for submission, extramural fellowship or grant proposal, development of a new collaborative project).
- d) The timeline for the proposed research assignment. If appropriate, include a brief description of work that will be completed on this project before and after the research assignment. For example, if the research assignment proposes the completion of the final four chapters of a book, describe the status and timeline for the preparation of the initial chapters prior to the proposed research assignment and the anticipated time for the final preparation of the book after the research assignment.
- e) The feasibility of completing the proposed work.
- f) Why the research assignment is necessary for this work to be completed in the proposed timeline.

*Proposals that do not clearly document expected products, timeline, necessity of the research assignment, and feasibility will be at a competitive disadvantage.* Likewise, it is essential to describe the proposed work in a way that is understandable to a broad audience of scholars (not just experts in the applicant's discipline). Note that proposed plans of research, scholarship, and creative activity may involve work that is nearing completion (e.g., completion of a book or major creative project or preparation of a major extramural funding submission) or work that is in more preliminary stages (e.g., development of a new collaborative program of research or initial development of a book project). However, in either case the application must clearly document the activity, significance, outcome, timeline, feasibility, and necessity of the research assignment for completion of the proposed scholarship. The application may not exceed four pages. Supplemental materials including bibliography may be included but are not to exceed an additional four pages.

The applicant's curriculum vitae should be three pages max. It should include relevant professional and work experiences, service to the University, and a bibliography of relevant publications, creative works, and other scholarly activities.

## D

**3. Department Head/Program Director Recommendation Letter**

All research assignment applications must be approved by the applicant's department head/program director and include a letter of endorsement. Before approving and endorsing an application, the head/director should consider the applicant's eligibility for a research assignment [that is, the applicant has 1) tenure, 2) at least five years' service at UNCG, and 3) no previous junior off-campus assignment (JOCA) nor post-tenure research assignment in the four years prior to the beginning of the proposed assignment]. Department heads should also carefully consider the number of faculty in the department applying for research assignments in a given year both in terms of staffing in the department and competitiveness of the applications. Although there is no limit on the number of research assignment applications that a department can submit in a single year, the department head may want to work with faculty in advance to stagger applications across years. Furthermore, if there are multiple applications from a single department, the department head's recommendations should include a critical evaluation of each application.

The Department Head/Program Director's endorsement letter should comment on the following elements of the proposal:

- a) The proposed plan of research, scholarship, and creative activity
- b) The significance of the proposed work
- c) The specific outcome or product of the work
- d) The feasibility of the proposed work
- e) The need for a research assignment to complete this work

Department Head/Program Directors must also complete the Dean's form estimating the cost of the proposed research assignments in the department. If any of the recommendations are contingent on a faculty member receiving an external fellowship or other award, the application must provide the name of award being applied for (specific program, not just the agency or foundation) and the expected amount of the award.

**4. College Review Process**

Applications for research assignments by faculty in the College of Arts & Sciences will be reviewed by an *ad hoc* committee of College faculty members chaired by the Associate Dean of Research. The committee is charged with advising the Dean regarding the quality and appropriateness of applications for research assignment. Specifically, the committee reviews the proposals, provides a numerical rating, and prepares brief (one paragraph) commentaries. The committee consists of nine faculty members (three each from the Natural Sciences, Social Sciences, and Arts and Humanities). Committee members typically serve three-year terms (ideally with 1/3 of the committee changing each year). Committee members are recused from reviewing proposals submitted from their department/program or from those for which they have a conflict of interest.

Each member of the committee independently reviews each application based upon the following criteria:

- a) Overall merit of the research, scholarship, and/or creative activity that will be conducted during the proposed research assignment



- b) Significance of the work and the contribution it will make to the applicant's discipline – including the products that will result from this work
- c) Feasibility of completing the proposed work in the proposed timeline
- d) Need for the research assignment to complete the proposed work

Committee members independently submit a short, written summary to the committee chair commenting on the extent to which the proposal meets the above-listed criteria, as well as any other strengths or weaknesses noted about the proposal. They also assign a 5-point numerical rating following the Provost's guidelines: 5 – Excellent, 4 – Very Good, 3 – Good, 2 – Fair, 1 – Poor.

The committee chair compiles the ratings and meets with the entire committee to discuss each proposal. Based upon the individual reviews and the committee meeting, the chair prepares a document for the Dean containing the ratings and a summary describing each proposal and the committee's review.

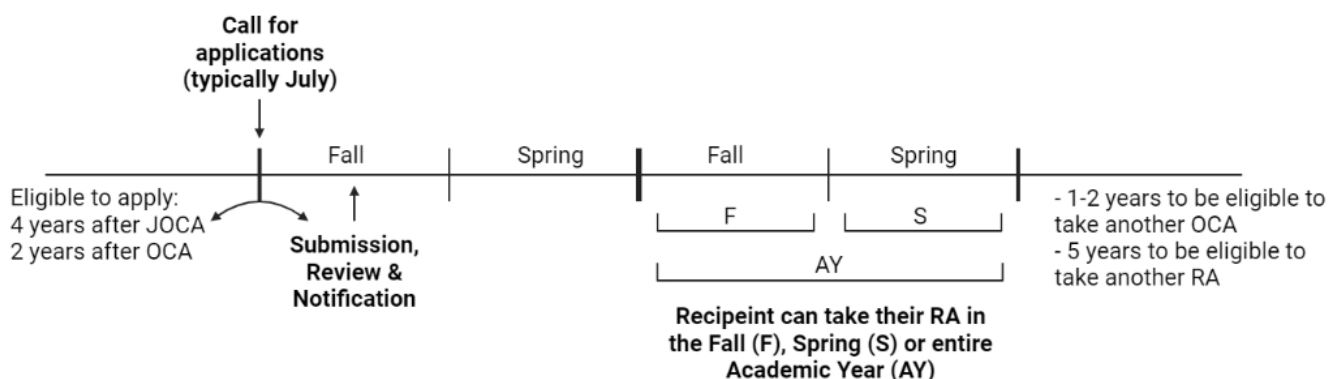
The Dean reviews the committee's ratings and determines how many proposals can be approved, given the total anticipated funds available in the College to replace instruction, the priorities for funding established by the committee's ratings, and the cost of replacement for individual faculty members. The Dean may negotiate costs of replacement with department heads so as to maximize the number of proposals that can be approved.

Proposals that cannot be funded in a given year will not be held over to a subsequent year. Doing this creates a backlog and may result in more meritorious proposals submitted in a later year being denied funding. Faculty may resubmit a proposal (with modifications if appropriate) as many times as they wish without prejudice.

*Approved, April 17, 2014*

*Revised August 19, 2014*

RA timeline (by semester):



KEY: OCA = Off-Campus Assignment; JOCA = Junior Off-Campus Assignment; RA = Research Assignment

## **E. CAS Support for Fellowship Recipients.**

Fellowship awards typically require a commitment of matching salary and an off-campus assignment for recipients from their home institution. The CAS policy is to match the salary provided by an external fellowship up to a maximum of 50% of the recipient's base salary for the period of the award, subject to approval of the Department Head/Program Director and Associate Dean for Research, and the availability of funds. This means that in order to maintain full salary for the requested leave period, the value of the fellowship must be at least one-half of the value of the recipient's base salary during that period. If the value of the fellowship is more than one-half of the value of the base salary, then the fellowship must cover as much as possible of the cost of fringe benefits on the fellowship portion of the salary. (The current UNCG fringe benefit rate is 43%, updated December 2021.) This is required because the State of North Carolina does not allow the use of state funds to pay benefits on non-state funded (e.g., fellowship funded) salary.

If the value of the fellowship exceeds 50% of the recipient's base salary during the period of the award and fully covers the fringe benefits on the fellowship portion of the salary, the recipient may use any remaining funds to pay for additional expenses within the funding agency guidelines. Note, however, that a fellowship cannot be used to increase the recipient's base salary.

If the total amount of the fellowship is less than 50% of the base salary, the CAS will match only the amount of the fellowship, meaning that the recipient's total salary for the year will be reduced. Some fellowships provide relatively low levels of financial support. In general, it is expected that such fellowships will be combined with other awards, such as a University Research Assignment rather than being used alone to fully support a leave. Thus, applicants are advised to begin planning well in advance of the application due date and to have a well-developed budget.

Note that salary support from the CAS is limited to fellowships that support research, scholarship, or creative work. Fellowships that primarily support other activities, such as Fulbright Lecture awards, will not be supported under this policy.

### **Eligibility for CAS Support for Fellowships**

Only full-time tenured or tenure-track faculty members are eligible for supplementary salary support from the CAS. *Professional-track faculty or instructors may be granted an off-campus assignment if they receive a fellowship; however, all salary and benefit support for the period of the fellowship would be from the fellowship (and may mean that the faculty member receives less than their full UNCG salary for the period of the award).*

CAS support for fellowship awards and off-campus assignments is generally limited to a one-year period. Requests for longer award periods are not encouraged and require special approval from the Dean and should be discussed in advance with the department head and Associate Dean for Research.

Tenured and tenure-track faculty members cannot expect to receive an off-campus assignment and supplementary salary support for a fellowship more often than once every three years

(however, this does not mean that these will be granted automatically every three years). A faculty member's absence from campus more often than one year in three would limit his/her ability to contribute to the university's teaching mission, interact with colleagues, assist with the service obligations of the faculty, and share the benefits of the leave with the University.

Faculty members must return to UNCG for at least twice the period of the fellowship or will be required to repay the salary received during the period of the fellowship [additionally, TSERS requires that employees on approved Leaves of Absence (LOA) for education purposes return to service as a contributing member for at least 3 years or service credit earned during the LOA will be cancelled].

Tenured faculty who are eligible for a University Research Assignment in the year for which the award is requested should apply for a Research Assignment for one year at half salary (with or without the option of a semester at full salary if the award is not granted), following procedures announced annually by the Provost. Note that if both the fellowship and the research assignment are awarded in the same year, the research assignment, rather than the College fellowship policy, will provide the supplemental salary match. In other words, the applicant will not receive matching funds from both the CAS Fellowship Program and the University Research Assignment Program.

#### **Preparation and Submission of Fellowship Applications:**

Faculty members who plan to submit a fellowship application should begin this process well in advance of the agency's submission deadlines. The first steps are to review the fellowship policy, determine if you are eligible for CAS support, and consult with your Department Head/Program Director. The department head must certify that the department can cover the cost of the lost instruction with the funds recovered from the proposed fellowship award (less the cost of benefits covered by the CAS). Applications for external fellowships must be endorsed by the Department Head/Program Director using the fellowship notification form available from the CAS Office of Research; see [CAS Office of Research → Policies → Fellowship notification form](#) (also located in Section E). Scanned copies of this form must be submitted to the CAS Office of Research and uploaded as an attachment to Cayuse.

All fellowship applications must be uploaded into Cayuse (UNCG's online grant submission portal), even if the applicant will directly submit the final application to the funding agency. This provides an official record of the submission so that the PI and their department will be credited for the submission. It is also the official mechanism by which proposals are reviewed and approved at the department, college, and university levels. Finally, the submission in Cayuse provides the official record of the CAS salary support and commitment to an off-campus assignment during the period of the fellowship. Please see Section F for information about submitting application materials in Cayuse.

**Note that if a faculty member applies for a fellowship without completing the fellowship notification form or without approval at the department, college, and university levels in Cayuse, CAS will be under no obligation to recognize the award, to provide supplemental salary support, or to provide an off-campus assignment.**

The fellowship award should be paid to UNCG and must cover salary and as much fringe benefits as possible. If the funding agency will not permit this, then the recipient must agree to accept a partial salary from UNCG and receive the fellowship as a direct payment from the agency. In this case, it is the recipient's responsibility to make arrangements with HRS regarding benefits coverage and to pay all necessary taxes.

Recipients should be aware that awarded fellowship amounts are sometimes less than the amount that was originally requested in the application. The CAS will only match the awarded amount of the fellowship, not the originally requested amount (up to 50% of the recipient's salary during the award period). Furthermore, note that matching funds from the CAS are contingent upon their availability at the time of the award.

### **Information for Department Heads/Program Directors**

If the fellowship is awarded, the department head will request that the recipient be given an off-campus assignment for research by submitting a memorandum to the Dean with appropriate paperwork. This paperwork includes a PD7 to place the off-campus assignment (a second PD7 will be required for a return from off-campus assignment). In cases of externally funded fellowships, the department also needs to do a Job Labor Distribution EPAF, to split the funding between state and grant fund numbers. As noted above, Department Head/Program Directors must be able to cover the replacement costs for faculty with no more than the salary award after accounting for benefit costs. Note that fellowships vary in terms of the amount of benefits that they will cover (ranging from 0 to 100%). The current UNCG benefit rate is 43% (as of December 2021). In the case of a fellowship that does not account for any of the benefit costs, the amount for benefits can be calculated by dividing the salary amount of the fellowship by 1.41. For example, if a recipient's fellowship provides \$45,000 in salary and no benefits, the department head will have  $\$45,000/1.41=\$31,915$  to cover the replacement of the faculty member's teaching. Any benefits paid for the replacement instruction will come from the common benefit pool and are not included in the \$31,915.

### **Supplemental Funding for Fellowship Recipients**

Faculty who apply for fellowships that will pay part or all of their academic-year salary, but that do not include funding to pay other expenses, such as travel, may apply for supplemental funding from CAS. The amount of support provided cannot be guaranteed and will depend on the number of requests and on the availability of funds. Funds should be requested in a memo to the Associate Dean for Research at the time of application and must include a description of the specific activities for which supplemental funding is requested, explaining how they will advance the goals of the project. Requests may also be submitted after the fellowship is awarded, but that makes it less likely that funding will be available to support the request. All requests must be clearly linked to the goals of the project supported by the fellowship. Applicants are expected to request support from other internal sources in addition to making a request to the CAS. The Associate Dean for Research will suggest appropriate sources when the fellowship application is submitted.



# FELLOWSHIP NOTIFICATION FORM

## UNCG College of Arts & Sciences Notice of Intent to Seek External Fellowship Support

This form must be completed by any faculty member in the College of Arts & Sciences (CAS) who plans to apply for an external fellowship that will involve an off-campus assignment for all or part of an academic year and/or that will entail a request for supplemental salary support. All fellowship applications should be approved at the department, college, and university levels prior to submission to the funder.

This form should be first approved by the department and then submitted to the CAS Office of Research (CAS OOR). If you are submitting the same proposal to more than one funder, you must complete a separate Fellowship Notification Form for each application.

**Note:** Tenured/tenure-track faculty are eligible for CAS fellowship support once every three years. If a fellowship proposal is submitted to a funder without a completed notification form or without required approvals, CAS is under no obligation to recognize the award, provide supplemental salary support, or provide an off-campus assignment. See all CAS Fellowship Policies.

Faculty Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Dept. / Program: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Title of proposal: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of funding agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Period for which support is requested: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of last Research Leave or Fellowship: \_\_\_\_\_

Support requested from agency: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Agency submission deadline: \_\_\_\_\_

If the amount of support requested is less than 50% of your salary for the requested time period, check one or more of the following or attach a separate explanation:

The award will be combined with a University Research Assignment or JOCA.

I am submitting applications for more than one fellowship.

I will accept partial salary for the period of the award.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Applicant Signature Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**DEPARTMENTAL APPROVAL** *The department can accommodate the applicant's absence for the period indicated and any lost teaching can be covered by the amount of salary that will be recouped by the College (typically the total value of the award minus 42% to cover fringe benefits).*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dept Head / Director Signature Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Dept Head / Director Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## F. GUIDELINES FOR PREPARING FELLOWSHIP APPLICATIONS IN CAYUSE

### Overview

- Applicants (especially those who are unfamiliar with Cayuse) are encouraged to seek assistance from the College of Arts & Sciences (CAS) Office of Research prior to beginning the application (for beginning steps, see [here](#)), as well as during the process of completing the submission in Cayuse SP. Additional help information for Cayuse can be found [here](#). A [Cayuse SP User Guide](#) is also available.
- All fellowship applications must be submitted in Cayuse SP – even if the applicant will directly submit the final application. This provides an official record of the submission so that the PI and their department will be credited for the submission. It is also the official mechanism by which the proposal is reviewed and approved at the department, college, and university levels. Finally, the submission in Cayuse provides the official record of the CAS salary support and commitment to an off-campus assignment during the period of the fellowship.
- Applicants are encouraged to contact the CAS Office of Research and begin a Cayuse submission as soon as they know they will be applying for a fellowship. However, applications should be submitted in Cayuse by the PI no later than five days prior to the funding agency's submission deadline. This will allow adequate time for the department head, Associate Dean for Research, and Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP) staff to review and approve the proposal. Note that submitting the proposal in Cayuse does not mean that it is being submitted to the funding agency. It simply means that the information in Cayuse is being submitted for approval by the department head, Associate Dean, and OSP staff. You will still be able to revise your proposal narrative prior to the submission to the funding agency.
- Applicants should enter submission notes in Cayuse in order to clarify or provide additional detail about applications that the department head, Associate Dean for Research, or OSP staff may need to know.

### WALK-THROUGH OF THE CAYUSE APPLICATION

Please keep in mind that the information required in Cayuse may not always seem directly relevant to the proposal. However, this is information needed by the research staff in order to provide final approval of the submission. Please note that CAS Office of Research Staff are available to assist you with submission of information in Cayuse. Training is also offered [here](#).

\*\*\*Detailed instructions on how to enter your information for a new proposal into Cayuse are available in the Cayuse user guide, [here](#).

**The CAS Office of Research is available to help faculty with fellowship proposals! If you need assistance with Cayuse, with your budget, with questions, etc., please contact Chad Fogleman at 334.4757 or [jcfogleman@uncg.edu](mailto:jcfogleman@uncg.edu)**

## Sample Budget Justifications for Cayuse Applications

In order to facilitate review of fellowship proposals, investigators are required to upload a budget justification document as an attachment in Cayuse. This appendix provides a description of the information needed for the justification and examples. The College of Arts & Sciences (CAS) fellowship policy states:

The CAS policy is to match the salary provided by an external fellowship up to a maximum of 50% of the recipient's base salary for the period of the award, subject to approval of the department head and Associate Dean for Research, and the availability of funds. This means that in order to maintain full salary for the requested leave period, the value of the fellowship must be at least one-half of the value of the recipient's salary during that period. If the value of the fellowship is more than one-half of the value of the base salary, then the fellowship must cover the cost of fringe benefits on the fellowship portion of the salary. (The current UNCG fringe benefit rate is 42%.)

The budget justification must indicate the applicant's annual salary, the expected amount of the fellowship, the duration of the fellowship period, and how the fellowship funds will be applied to cover salary, fringe benefit, and any additional expenses. If a funding agency requires additional itemization of budget costs, these should be noted and included in the budget justification. Several examples are listed below:

**EXAMPLE 1:** Faculty annual salary: \$80,000; expected fellowship amount: \$40,000.

In this case, the fellowship covers exactly one-half of the annual salary. Therefore, the fellowship would not cover any of the fringe benefit costs. The investigator would attach the following budget justification statement in Cayuse:

**BUDGET JUSTIFICATION:**

My annual salary is \$80,000

Expected amount of the fellowship is \$40,000

Period of the award: one year

Based upon these figures, I will apply the full amount of the fellowship towards my annual salary and benefits and request the College of Arts & Sciences to cover my remaining salary and benefits.

**EXAMPLE 2:** Faculty salary: \$80,000; expected fellowship amount: \$45,000.

In this case, the fellowship covers more than one-half of the annual salary. The fringe benefit costs on the \$40,000 salary covered by the fellowship (based upon a 42% rate) is \$16,800. The investigator should apply the full value of the fellowship towards the salary and benefit, although it will not cover the full salary and benefit costs (\$56,800). The investigator would attach the following budget justification statement in Cayuse:

**BUDGET JUSTIFICATION:**

My annual salary is \$80,000

Expected amount of the fellowship is \$45,000

Period of the award: one year

Based upon these figures, I will apply the full amount of the fellowship to cover one-half

of my annual salary (\$40,000) and part of my benefit costs (\$5,000 of \$16,800) for one semester. I request that the College of Arts & Sciences will cover my remaining salary and benefits.

**EXAMPLE 3:** Faculty salary: \$80,000; expected fellowship amount: \$60,000.

In this case, the fellowship covers more than one-half of the annual salary and the associated benefit costs (\$56,800). The investigator would be able to apply the remaining fellowship funds following the funding agency guidelines. The investigator would attach the following budget justification statement in Cayuse:

**BUDGET JUSTIFICATION:**

My annual salary is \$80,000

Expected amount of the fellowship is \$60,000

Period of the award: one year

Based upon these figures, I will apply \$57,200 of the fellowship to cover one-half of my annual salary (\$40,000) and benefits (\$16,800). I request that the College of Arts & Sciences match one-half of my annual salary and the resulting benefits. I will use the remaining \$2,800 from the fellowship in accordance with the funding agency guidelines.

**EXAMPLE 4:** Faculty salary: \$80,000; expected fellowship amount: \$30,000.

In this case, the fellowship covers less than one-half of the annual salary. The College will match this amount, but this will leave the applicant at less than full salary for the year. Furthermore, the fellowship would not cover any of the fringe benefit costs. The investigator would attach the following budget justification statement in Cayuse:

**BUDGET JUSTIFICATION:**

My annual salary is \$80,000

Expected amount of the fellowship is \$30,000

Period of the award: one year

Based upon these figures, I will apply the full amount of the fellowship to my salary and request the College of Arts & Sciences to match this amount of salary. I understand that my annual salary during the fellowship period will be \$60,000.

**Award periods shorter than one year:**

Note that in the case of shorter award periods (e.g., one semester), the same guidelines and format would be followed.

**EXAMPLE 5:** Faculty annual salary: \$80,000; expected fellowship amount: \$25,000; period of the award: one semester.

In this case, the fellowship covers more than one-half of the salary during the award period. The fringe benefit costs on the \$20,000 salary covered by the fellowship (based upon a 42% rate) are \$8,400. The investigator should apply the full value of the fellowship towards the salary and benefit, although it will not cover the full salary and benefit costs (\$28,400). The investigator would attach the following budget justification statement in Cayuse:



**BUDGET JUSTIFICATION:**

My annual salary is \$80,000

Expected amount of the fellowship is \$25,000

Period of the award: one semester

Based upon these figures, I will apply the full amount of the fellowship to cover one-half of my salary during the award period (\$20,000) and part of my benefit costs (\$5,000 of \$8,400) for one semester. I request that the College of Arts & Sciences cover my remaining salary and benefits.

**Combining Research Assignments and Fellowships**

Faculty who apply for a fellowship and university research assignment in the same year should use the following justification format. If an applicant receives both the fellowship and the research assignment, the salary for the period not paid for by the fellowship will be paid in full by the research assignment. Note that the research assignment funds will be paid in lieu of matching funds from the CAS.

**EXAMPLE 6:** Faculty salary: \$80,000; expected fellowship amount: \$45,000.

In this case, the budget justification should indicate both contingencies if the fellowship is awarded – matching funds from the CAS fellowship program or salary from the university research assignment program.

**BUDGET JUSTIFICATION:**

My annual salary is \$80,000

Expected amount of the fellowship is \$45,000

Period of the award: one year

If I receive a university research assignment, I will apply the full amount of the fellowship to cover one-half of my annual salary (\$40,000) and part of my benefit costs (\$5,000 of \$16,800) for one semester. I request that the College of Arts & Sciences cover the cost of the remaining benefits not covered by the fellowship. I will use my research assignment to pay one-half of my annual salary and the resulting benefits.

If I do not receive a university research assignment, I will apply the full amount of the fellowship to cover one-half of my annual salary (\$40,000) and part of my benefit costs (\$5,000 of \$16,800) for one semester. I request that the College of Arts & Sciences match one-half of my annual salary and the resulting benefits, as well as the remaining benefits not covered by the fellowship.

**Cases not covered in the previous examples:**

The previous examples represent typical fellowship applications made by CAS faculty. However, this is not an exhaustive listing. In the case that a fellowship application does not fit within the examples above, the applicant should consult with the CAS Associate Dean for Research. For example:

- the fellowship funding agency does not specify the exact award amount at the time of the application
- the period of the award is unspecified or crosses semesters or academic years
- the applicant is applying for multiple awards or has other sources of matching funds

## G. College of Arts and Sciences Course Buyout Guidelines

### What is a Course Buyout?

A Course Buyout is when non-State (e.g., grant, indirect, Professorship) funds “buy” a faculty member’s released time by paying for a portion of their salary so that the equivalent amount of effort (%) can be spent working on the faculty member’s scholarship/research.

A “Buyout” situation applies when a faculty member is granted a course release in order to accommodate a faculty member’s work on an externally or otherwise funded project. The corresponding percentage of the faculty’s appointment is directly charged (accounted for) to the grant account/indirect fund/Professorship fund, etc. (budget) during the term of the buyout.

### Guidelines

A faculty member may elect to “buy out” of teaching (often referred to as “course release”) to work on a project, at a rate equal to (at minimum) **1/8<sup>th</sup> (12.5%) of their nine-month Institutional Base Salary (IBS),\* plus fringe (42%)** for each course release.

*\*Institutional Base Salary (IBS): is the annual compensation the university pays for activities performed (including, as applicable, research, teaching, and clinical practice) as part of an employee’s university appointment(s), specifically, INCLUDING: Regular Salary, Endowed Chair or professorship stipends; and Paid Professional leave (pay for sabbatical, vacation, and sick leave- not including sick leave pay payouts when departing from the university); EXCLUDING: Administrative stipends; Summer salary for non-12-month appointees; Service in excess payments; Royalties paid by the university; Reimbursements; and Any compensation of external professional activities, such as consulting or compensated peer review activities.*

NOTE: If a granting agency has its own specific formula for determining a course buyout, the Dean may allow the faculty member to buy out one course at the granting agency's rate.

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) sets an annual salary cap to limit the *Institutional Base Salary (IBS)* used to calculate salary and fringe benefits costs for an NIH application budget. Effective January 1, 2023, the annual salary cap is \$212,100. If a faculty member’s actual annualized base salary exceeds this amount, then the salary cap of \$212,100 must be used as the annual base for salary and fringe benefit cost calculations in the application budget (for more information from NIH, see [here](#)).

The National Science Foundation (NSF) requires that salary requests in grant budgets be expressed as months. No more than 2 months of regular salary may be requested for any senior personnel in any one year. The limit of two months’ salary includes compensation received from all NSF-funded grants. At UNCG, one course buyout equals 1.13 academic months of salary for faculty with a 9-month appointment and 1.25 academic months of salary for faculty with a 10-month appointment (for more information from NSF, see [here](#)).

### How the Buyout money is used

CAS will use the funds derived from the Buyout to pay the salary of the teaching replacement. Any leftover monies, typically state funds, will be divided 50/50 with the faculty member’s Department, to use at the Department’s discretion within the spending guidelines for state funds, and with CAS. CAS will use any such funds to further support our CAS Departments.

### Overall Restrictions

**Faculty must maintain a minimum of one organized course each semester.** They cannot buy out all their courses, or through a combination of course buyout and course release for administrative work, reduce their semester course load to zero.

**Ample time** must be given to the faculty members department(s) to plan accordingly for course coverage, and to allow for timely use of the funds received. If the grant is not successful, the chair must be informed immediately upon notification so that course assignments can be adjusted to fill out the faculty member's teaching load for the academic year.

### Procedures

All external grant applications must be processed through UNCG's Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP), via Cayuse.

A CAS Buyout Request Form (see sample at the end of this document) must be filled-out with all appropriate signatures when a portion of a faculty member's salary is being financed or subsidized through external grant or other non-State funding.

Requests for course releases are contingent upon the review and approval of the faculty member's Department Head/Program Director and the CAS Dean's office. The timing of the course release(s) must also be negotiated with the head/program director and is dependent upon curricular and other relevant departmental, college, and university needs. Normally, course buy-outs do not exempt faculty members from their regular service responsibilities. Course buy-outs likewise are normally for a limited portion of a faculty member's teaching responsibilities during a given academic year.

### Rationale (from UNCG's policy on Course Buyouts)

Per the University's Faculty Workload Guidelines document, all faculty instructional workloads are based on an initial 24 credit hour (8 course) assignment with reductions provided based on unit and departmental workload policies. Thus, a buyout for one course would represent 12.5% (1/8<sup>th</sup>) of the faculty workload. Faculty who are on instructional assignments below the base departmental workload may be asked to provide a higher percentage grant buyout to accommodate both the instructional release and release for research time in their workload that may be dedicated to the grant activity.

The buyout rates generated by this policy are not expected to affect the peer review decisions at federal and state agencies. In cases where buyout rates are thought to be a consideration in proposal funding decisions, the Dean, upon request from the Principal Investigator and Department Head/Program Director, can request an exception to the policy from the Associate Provost for Research. **In all cases, however, the minimal buyout rate for full-time academic appointments for a three-credit hour assignment is 12.5%.**

These guidelines are in line with federal and state regulations and should not penalize anyone applying for external funding. As with any set of guidelines, however, exceptions will be granted when it is necessary to do so.

UNCG's Course Buyout Policy has been effective at UNCG since Fall 2000.



# COURSE BUYOUT REQUEST FORM

Faculty member should complete sections A-D and then obtain their Department Head's approval/signature in section E. After obtaining Dept. Head signature, send to CAS OOR. Please note: Notice of Award must be received prior to the start date of the term for which you anticipate buy-out.

## A. APPLICANT INFORMATION

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Department: \_\_\_\_\_

**B. FUNDING INFORMATION:**                      Grant funding                      Other non-state fund

Name of Grant Funder / Fund: \_\_\_\_\_

If Grant funding, provide: Submission deadline: \_\_\_\_\_

Term of Grant (Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_ End Date: \_\_\_\_\_)

Total Expected Award Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

## C. COURSE LOAD

What is your normal teaching load (example 3/3)? \_\_\_\_\_

Which course(s) do you plan to buyout? List courses and provide the following detail for each:  
*Semester (Term, Year) / Course # & Course Title / Credit Hours*

**D. APPLICANT SIGNATURE** \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**E. DEPT. HEAD SIGNATURE** \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Notes:

To obtain Dean's Office Approval, email your application with D & E signatures plus any attachments to Chad Fogleman, CAS OOR Pre-Award Grants Administrator, at [jcfogleman@uncg.edu](mailto:jcfogleman@uncg.edu).

## F. DEAN'S OFFICE APPROVAL (DEAN'S OFFICE USE ONLY)

Dean's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## H

**H. FAQs**

Here we answer questions that are frequently asked about Junior Off-Campus Assignments (JOCAs), Research Assignments, and Fellowships. The information provided supplements but does not replace the applicable College and University policies which should also be consulted. If you have additional questions, contact the Associate Dean for Research.

**1. What assignments for research and scholarship are available to me before tenure?**

- If you are an Assistant Professor, you will be awarded a one-semester assignment for research (the Junior Off-Campus Assignment) after reappointment to a second term. **See Section C.**
- You may also request an Off-Campus Assignment if you are awarded an external fellowship (subject to restrictions explained in the College's policy on external fellowships). **See Section E.**

**2. Why should I apply for fellowships in my first three years if I can expect a Junior Off-Campus Assignment anyway?**

- Such awards are prestigious and contribute importantly to your professional reputation and the strength of your tenure dossier, and because all faculty members have an obligation to seek external support for their scholarship, regardless of the internal support that may also be available. Such external awards will also increase your competitiveness for future awards far more than an internal award can.

**3. What is the difference between an Off-Campus Assignment, a Junior Off-Campus Assignment, and a Research Assignment?**

- An Off-Campus Assignment for research provides release from teaching and service in order for you to accept an external fellowship award. The funding agency must require that this release be provided as a condition of the award – an Off-Campus Assignment cannot be requested simply because you receive external funding. The College will match the value of the award, up to a maximum of 50% of your 9-month salary. **See Section E.**
- A JOCA provides a one-semester release from teaching and service at full salary, contingent on an acceptable work plan and approval of department head, after reappointment to a second probationary term. It is not competitive. **See Section C.**
- University Research Assignments are awarded competitively to tenured faculty and provide release from teaching and service for one semester at full salary or one academic year at half salary, contingent on the recommendation of the Research Assignment Committee and the approval of the Dean and Provost. A tenured faculty member is eligible for a research assignment every five years. **See Section D.**

**4. What is the difference between an Off-Campus Assignment in the case of a fellowship, and a course buy-out in the case of a grant?**

- Fellowships generally require that the recipient have no institutional responsibilities while on the fellowship. Thus, a fellowship holder is given an Off-Campus Assignment for research. A grant does not normally require complete reassignment of duties but may provide funds that allow for buyout of courses, freeing up some additional time for research. For Course Buyout information, see **Section G.**

**5. What are the expectations regarding time back on campus after a research assignment or off-campus assignment?**

- You are expected to return to your position at UNCG for at least twice the length of time for which you were on assignment, i.e., for one year after a one-semester assignment and for two years after a one-year assignment (this expectation does not apply if you have taken a Leave without Pay).

**6. What is the maximum time I can be on an Off-Campus Assignment or Research Assignment?**

- Normally, Assignments are limited to one year; under exceptional circumstances, this may be extended. If you want to request an Off-Campus Assignment for longer than one year, you must discuss it with your department head/program director as well as the Dean before making any plans (but please know that this is discouraged). See **Section E**.

**7. Why must I get departmental head/program director approval for a course buyout in a grant proposal?**

- Department heads/Program Directors need to be sure that the buyout you are requesting can be accommodated and will need to incorporate the possibility that the grant will be awarded into schedule planning for the affected semesters. For more info on course buyouts, see **Section G**.

**8. What is the maximum salary I can expect from UNCG if a fellowship pays less than full salary?**

- The College's policy is to match the salary provided by an external fellowship up to a maximum of 50% of your base salary for the period of the award. If the total amount of the fellowship is less than 50% of your base salary, the College will match only the amount of the fellowship, meaning that your total salary for the year will be reduced. The matching funds are contingent upon the availability of CAS funds.
- Some fellowships provide relatively low levels of financial support. In general, it is expected that such fellowships will be combined with other awards, such as a University Research Assignment rather than being used alone to fully support a leave. Thus, you are advised to begin planning well in advance of the application due date and have a well-developed budget.

**9. Why must I submit a Fellowship Notification Form, and submit my fellowship proposal through Cayuse, if the funding agency allows me to apply directly to them?**

- The Fellowship Notification Form (found [here](#)) certifies that the department will be able to cover your absence with the funds available if the fellowship is awarded. This form should be submitted as soon as you decide to apply for a fellowship. Approval of the proposal itself, via Cayuse, ensures that all requirements of the funding agency can be satisfied and also ensures that you, your department, the College, and UNCG are credited for the fellowship submission.
- If you fail to submit the Fellowship Notification Form, or route the fellowship proposal through Cayuse, then the College is under no obligation to provide any support if the fellowship is awarded. In that case you could request a leave without pay if you wish to accept the award.

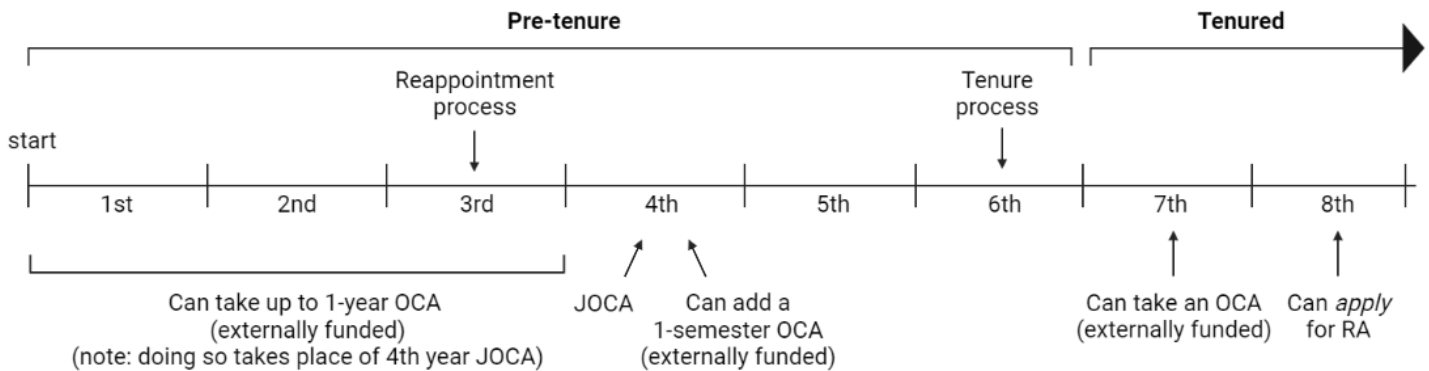
**10. Why must I have all aspects of a proposal finalized in Cayuse at least 5 days before the agency deadline?**

- The Office of Sponsored Programs needs at least five working days to process all proposals that UNCG must submit online on your behalf to ensure that there are no errors. Even the smallest error might cause the agency to reject the application, and it is not unusual for a proposal to be rejected several times before all errors are corrected. This also allows time to get all appropriate proposal approvals and to deal with possible technical issues on UNCG’s end or on the agency’s end.

**11. What should I do if my grant or fellowship is not fully funded?**

- It is not uncommon for grants and fellowships to be funded at a level below that requested. In such instances, for grants, it is your responsibility to restructure the scope of the work to match the budget available. The university cannot supplement the unfunded portion of your project. It is advised that you work in concert with the program officer at the funding agency, as well as with UNCG Office of Contracts & Grants, as you revise your workplan and budget. For fellowships, it is your responsibility to ensure that your salary will be adequate. Policy permits the university salary match to be equivalent only to salary award received from the fellowship up to 50% of your salary. A fellowship award of less than the requested/needed amount needs to be discussed with the department head and dean before accepting the fellowship.

Typical timeline (in years):



KEY: OCA = Off-Campus Assignment; JOCA = Junior Off-Campus Assignment; RA = Research Assignment