

Salary Savings Research Incentive Program

University of North Florida

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Academic Affairs and the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs propose the following program for incentivizing sponsored research.

Purpose: The University of North Florida expects faculty to conduct research and encourages them to seek external funds for research. One way to promote faculty research activity is to ensure that external funds are used to the fullest extent possible to support the faculty member's research while building the research capabilities of the university.

Scope: This program applies to university funds (E&G funds) normally allocated for any portion of an employee's base salary and benefits that are instead being paid from sponsored agreements (C&G funds); the replaced university funds are referred to as "salary savings." This includes funds for reassigning teaching effort to the externally funded activity (often described as "course buyout"), and funds that pay for partial effort on externally funded activity that a faculty member would otherwise spend on university-funded research and/or service (here described as "research reassignment").

Implementation: Faculty members are encouraged to consider two approaches for using external funds to reassign university-funded effort towards the sponsored research effort. *Note that these both require approval by the department chair and college dean:*

Teaching Reassignment: Also known as a "course buyout," this is the traditional practice of using external C&G funding to reassign teaching effort towards the sponsored research effort. These reassignments reduce teaching load and increase the proportion of effort spent on research. Instruction for the bought-out course is typically replaced with an adjunct or overload assignment.

Summer Research Reassignment: This method allows faculty to buy out all or a portion of their E&G-funded research effort with C&G money and reassign the entirety of the E&G effort to the summer term. There is no change in teaching load. Put another way, the externally-funded research effort replaces the university-funded research effort, which is deferred to the summer.

Both approaches generate savings of E&G money, 100% of which will be distributed to a designated salary savings account in the faculty member's college. This account will temporarily hold the funds for Summer Research Reassignments until they are used during the summer term. This account will also be used to pay adjuncts or overloads for Teaching Reassignments generated from sponsored research.

Funds remaining in the salary savings account after these commitments are met must be used to support the research activities of the college, department, and individual(s) that

generated the salary savings through sponsored activity. Each college has the authority to use salary savings funds according to their own strategic initiatives for growing and sustaining faculty research. Examples of appropriate use include the following:

- graduate and undergraduate student research support
- research equipment and supplies
- service and repair of research instrumentation and equipment
- research laboratory renovation and construction
- staff whose effort is primarily in support of research activity
- additional summer salary and/or course releases
- professional travel for research purposes
- startup packages for new faculty
- “bridge funding” to support research between grants

To assist with planning, 90% of the estimated salary portion will be released to the college early in each semester; the balance will be disbursed after the accounting for that semester’s salary savings is completed. Salary savings money remaining at the end of each fiscal year will be retained as carry-forward funds to ensure that colleges have the ability to use salary savings strategically.