

Faculty Course / Research Buyout Guidelines College of Arts and Sciences

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Faculty workloads are described in §3.VIII of the Faculty Handbook:

“A full-time workload (one full-time equivalency or FTE) for a University of Alabama faculty member is twelve credits of teaching per semester combined with the other duties required by good service/academic citizenship. This normally translates into four, three-credit courses (0.20 FTE each) with the remaining 0.20 devoted to service. [...] For tenure-track/tenured faculty, teaching loads generally are reduced to allow for research. [...] a faculty member teaching two courses a semester who is consistently not performing to standards in research may have course load increased by one course per semester for the first year and then to the full twelve credits of teaching per semester in subsequent years.”

Thus, a 2-2 teaching load is a reduced teaching load for research-active faculty; faculty who are not research-active should normally have teaching loads greater than 2-2.

Tenured faculty may use external research funding to bring their teaching loads below 2-2 in two ways: **implicitly**, with annual funding exceeding a threshold; and **explicitly**, with course buyouts budgeted in grants. Both forms of course buyout are subject to department chair (& Dean) approval and described below. Course buyouts are meant to incentivize significantly funded research. “Funding” is defined as total (direct + indirect) funding. Chairs will determine what fraction of their faculty can have reduced teaching loads at the same time.

Implicit course buyout funding thresholds

The funding thresholds to be eligible for reduced teaching loads (below 2-2) without explicit course buyouts are:

2-1 teaching load: ~\$20,000/yr in current external funding share.

1-1 teaching load: ~\$100,000/yr in current external funding share
or a 2nd simultaneous grant of at least ~\$20,000/yr.

These funding thresholds may increase with rank, funding history, & PI/Co-PI status.

Explicit course buyouts

Faculty may use external funds to explicitly buy out courses, subject to chair (& Dean) approval.

\$10k/yr as PI is the external funding share threshold to be eligible for a course buyout

The cost of a one course buyout in one semester is 10% of the faculty member's 9-month salary, with a cap of \$10k.

Chairs must be given sufficient notice to plan for the replacement teaching.

Course buyout funds will normally go to the department, which will be responsible for funding any replacement teaching.

Normally, courses cannot be bought out below a minimum teaching load of one course per academic year (1-0 teaching load).

Course buyout to a 1-0 teaching load: For faculty with 1-1 teaching loads that have not been attained with explicit buyouts from external funds, a buyout to a 1-0 requires that two courses be bought out explicitly: one for the course release previously gifted implicitly in a particular semester, plus the additional course that will be bought out to go from a 1-1 to a 1-0 load.

Buyout of research time during academic year

Faculty are also encouraged to use external funding to buy out a portion of their research FTE during the academic year (“salary savings”).

50% of such funds will be retained by the Department; the Department may choose to allocate some fraction of these funds to a research fund associated with the faculty investigator;

50% of such funds will be retained by the College; the Department / faculty investigator may request that some fraction of these funds are reallocated to the Department / faculty member.

Supplemental pay for teaching overloads will not normally be provided for faculty with reduced teaching loads (any load below 2-2)