



ACADEMIC POLICY

Faculty Instructional Course Release Policy (AA 10)

POLICY STATEMENT

Retaining and promoting faculty at NSC hinges on a faculty member's ability to be an effective instructor, active scholar, and good organizational citizen. This policy establishes general provisions to cover the circumstances and limitations under which instructional course releases may be appropriate for Nevada State College (NSC) academic faculty. This policy applies to all full-time lecturers, tenure-track, and tenured faculty. This policy does not apply to emergency hires.

An Instructional Course Release permits a faculty member 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.

The purpose of Instructional Course Releases is to provide faculty members with time to undertake important activities such as scholarship, professional development, or other service for the College. The most common scenarios in which a faculty member may be eligible for course releases are for:

- A. Professional/scholarly development (e.g., new faculty, pre-tenure faculty);
- B. Administrative or service duties (e.g., chairing a department, Faculty Senate Chair);
- C. Sponsored-project research activities (e.g., grant buyout).

Instructional Course Releases do not relieve the faculty member from other responsibilities to the College such as advising, serving on committees, or participating in departmental business. Faculty members are expected to continue to be in residence and carry out their other duties during the term in which they have a course release.

DEFINITIONS

Course Buyout: A situation in which a faculty member obtains salary funding from an external source (e.g., sponsored project) to facilitate a reduced teaching load and reallocation of time to an extramurally-funded project.

Instructional Course Release: A semester-long agreement for a full-time faculty member to have a reduced teaching load while being paid their normal academic salary.

PROCEDURES

The following sections describe the circumstances in which academic faculty may be eligible for a course release.

I. Professional/Scholarly Development

The Office of the Provost sponsors course release programs to assist in the professional growth of academic faculty members. Instructional Course Releases create time for faculty to be involved in activities (e.g., pedagogical or scholarship development) that facilitate preparation for annual reviews and successful review for tenure/long-term contract.

A. Newly-hired faculty

1. Newly-hired tenure-track faculty are granted a **6-unit Instructional Course Release** to facilitate their teaching and scholarly development.
2. Newly-hired full-time lecturers are granted a **3-unit Instructional Course Release** to facilitate their teaching development.
3. The Instructional Course Release(s) may be taken in the faculty member's first academic year or may be split between the faculty member's first and second academic years.

B. Pre-tenure faculty

1. Deans and the Director of Libraries may request **one Instructional Course Release of up to 3 units** on behalf of a pre-tenure faculty member to address improvements needed in quality of teaching or scholarship productivity. Deans and the Director of Libraries recommend and the Provost approves pre-tenure Instructional Course Releases.

II. Administrative or Service Duties

Faculty members who assume significant administrative or service responsibilities within their department (e.g., Department Chair) or for the College (e.g., Faculty Senate Chair) may be granted Instructional Course Releases during their terms of service by recommendation of the Dean or Director of Libraries and approval of the Provost. Refer to the appropriate policy or constitutional bylaws for the number of units eligible for release.

III. Sponsored-Project Research Activities (e.g., grant buyout)

Faculty members may request a Course Buyout in order to 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 Course Buyout. In effect, the grant "buys" the faculty member's released time so the equivalent amount of effort can be spent working on the grant. The standard method for determining the cost of a Course Buyout, consonant with federal grant practice, is to calculate the cost of the time the faculty member will work on the grant activities based on a percentage of the faculty member's annual salary, e.g. 25% effort dedicated to grant activities has a Course Buyout cost of 25% of the faculty member's annual salary.

A. Guidelines for Course Buyouts

1. Faculty members may not buy out of more than 6 units per semester or 12 units per academic year.
2. Faculty members may not buy out of teaching responsibilities if it will compromise the ability of the department to deliver its instructional program.
3. Course Buyouts for pursuit of external personal or business interests not related to the mission of the College shall not be granted.
4. The amount compensated by a grant should at minimum cover the cost of hiring a replacement to offer the course; the amount is to be determined by mutual consent of the Department chair and Dean, or Director of Libraries, but generally should be at least 10% of the faculty member's academic year salary.
5. A portion of the Course Buyout amount is expected to be used for funding an alternative source to teach the released course(s) and related instructional expenses.
6. Buyout of teaching does not release faculty members from performing their service obligations on behalf of the College or the faculty member's school/department.

B. Requesting Course Buyouts

Faculty shall make Course Buyout requests via e-mail to the Department Chair, Dean or Director of Libraries, and Provost at the time of proposal development and before proposal submission. Faculty who receive grant funding without prior approval for Course Buyouts are subject to forfeiting course releases.

The request should include:

- the number of units requested and the anticipated semester(s) in which a Course Buyout is requested;
- the size and scope of work to be conducted;
- rationale as to why a Course Buyout is necessary to complete the scope of work;
- the sponsor providing funding.

After conferring with the Department Chair and/or Dean or Director of Libraries, the Provost grants the final approval for the Course Buyout. Approval is given on condition that an award is made and the course release time has been budgeted according to Course Buyout procedures.

The faculty member shall work with the Office of Sponsored Projects to budget for a Course Buyout in the proposal to an external sponsor. For the purposes of Course Buyouts, a release from one 3-unit course is defined as equivalent to 10% of a faculty member's full-time equivalent (FTE, assuming 1 FTE is equal to 80% teaching and 20% scholarship and service). The faculty member should budget for the appropriate amount of salary and fringe to be charged to the grant when the course release is received.

In the rare case where an award is less than the amount requested in a grant proposal, faculty members are not obligated to use a proposed Course Buyout, as long as the funding agency allows for redistribution or rebudgeting of awarded funds. If a faculty member chooses to forgo a Course Buyout as part of a rebudgeting process, it is their responsibility to work with the Office of Sponsored Projects to ensure the funding agency grants any necessary approvals for the budget adjustment.

IV. Administration of Instructional Course Releases

Instructional Course Releases are administered by the Deans and monitored by the Provost's Office.

A full-time faculty member receiving an Instructional Course Release may not:

1. accept additional or "overload" teaching assignments for additional compensation. Under these circumstances, the Instructional Course Release should be deferred;
2. receive stipends in lieu of the Instructional Course Release(s);
3. buy out teaching responsibilities if it will compromise the ability of the department to deliver its instructional program.

Unless otherwise specified, Instructional Course Releases may be taken in increments that do not adversely affect the ability of the department or school to deliver their curriculum.

FORMS/INSTRUCTIONS

N/A

CONTACTS

SUBJECT	CONTACT	PHONE	EMAIL
Provost	Vickie Shields	702-992-2634	Vickie.Shields@nsc.edu

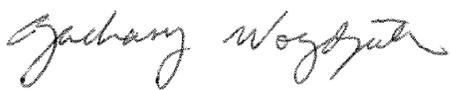
RELATED INFORMATION

AA 3: Academic Workload Policy

HISTORY

N/A

APPROVAL SIGNATURES PAGE

	4/3/18	Recommended: (Circle One)
Faculty Senate (Chair's Signature)	Date	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Approval Denial* Approval w/condition
	4/9/18	Recommended: (Circle One)
Office of the Provost (Provost's Signature)	Date	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Approval Denial* Approval w/condition
	10/8/18	(Circle One)
Office of the President (President's Signature)	Date	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Approval Denial* Approval w/condition

*Attach rationale for denial or conditional approval