

Research Buyouts and Salary Savings

What is a Research Buyout?

A research buyout is when a faculty member opts to place their salary charges onto one of their projects instead of being paid from a department account. The amount of salary that can be placed on a project varies by awarding agency, and salary placed on projects cannot be used to augment the faculty's existing pay rate. The maximum amount that can be bought out is the academic year E&G research FTE, not to exceed three months' salary (assuming no summer teaching). The funds will be available in the following summer only. Each case needs to be approved individually by the chair/director and college.

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College of Sciences Policy
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Research Buyout (Revised 10.21.09, 11.16.10, 06.14.17)

- Research buyout without course release
 - Transfer to Summer: A faculty member may buy out academic year research time without course release and transfer the state compensation to summer salary. The maximum amount that can be bought out is the academic year E&G research FTE, not to exceed three months' salary (assuming no summer teaching). E&G match commitments cannot be bought out. Transferred funds will be available only in the following summer.
 - Bonus: A faculty member may buy out academic year research time (including benefits) without course release and receive a portion of the salary savings (not including benefits) as a bonus. The buyout requires chair and dean approval, and requires a level of doctoral student support (stipend, FTE, and duration) that is typical for the department. The bonus amount depends on the amount of salary savings and the number of doctoral GRAs supported from any active contract or grants:

Supporting	Bonus
1 GRA	10% of salary savings
2 GRAs	20% of salary savings
3 GRAs	35% of salary savings
4 GRAs or more	50% of salary savings

For example, a faculty member with \$100,000 academic year salary who buys out 0.20 FTE will provide \$20,000 of salary plus benefits from his or her grants. If the faculty member supports one doctoral GRA, he or she will get a bonus of \$2,000 (10% of the salary savings excluding benefits). Remaining funds will be returned to the unit (in the example, \$18,000). For primary joint appointments, the remaining funds could be shared between the units upon mutual agreement.
 - Combination: A faculty member may transfer a portion of his or her E&G research buyout to summer. The remaining nontransferred funds qualify for the bonus above.
- Research buyout with course release
 - Buying out a course requires chair approval. Normally, all faculty will teach a minimum of one regular course per academic year. Exceptions require dean approval.
 - Release from one course requires a minimum buyout of 12.5% of the academic year salary plus benefits. If the faculty member is supporting doctoral students, as described above, he or she (with chair and dean approval) will receive a bonus that is half the amount shown in the table above. The remaining funds will be returned to the unit. If there is no bonus, all of the salary savings will be returned to the unit.
 - The unit will be responsible for replacing the faculty member in the classroom from the salary savings return.
 - A faculty member and chair/director may agree to accumulate buyouts until the 25% threshold is reached; e.g., a faculty member who buys out 5% of academic year salary (plus benefits) one semester and 7.5% (plus benefits) the next, could be released from one course the second semester. Buyouts can accumulate over only one year.