

UCCS Course Buyout Funding and Off-Load Incentive Guidelines

Purpose. These guidelines are meant to support decision-making regarding approval of and funding for *course buyouts* for any UCCS faculty member with at least a partial teaching appointment. All *course buyouts* require the approval of both the Department Chair and the appropriate Dean. *Course buy-outs* are distinct from a *course offload*. An *offload* is a redistribution of workload, based on a reallocation of internal resources. A *buy-out* is funded from grants, contracts, or other external sources. Deans have the authority and flexibility to approve differential workloads in the form of *course offloads* for faculty as they see fit.

Parameters:

- These guidelines do not address research offloads or other types of differentiated workload. Primary responsibility for establishing procedures regarding workload allocation for course offloads, research offloads or otherwise, rests with the Schools, Colleges, and Library.
- These guidelines encourage each academic unit to adopt its own process as part of its formal governance that complies with applicable federal, system, and campus requirements.
- Units can designate less stringent calculations, but should not exceed the parameters in these guidelines.
- In the absence of a written unit policy on file in the Provost's Office, these guidelines will serve as the effective procedure for course buyouts for the unit. All written unit policies shall be made publicly available.

RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL

Associate Vice Chancellor for Research
FA Committee of Research

November 13, 2025
October 28, 2025

APPROVED


Lynn Vidler (Nov 13, 2025 14:32:18 MST)

Provost & Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

November 13, 2025

Date

Externally funded course buy-outs

Course buy-outs funded from grants, contracts, or other external sources will be approved by stakeholders via the proposal routing form prior to funding submission.

The cost of a single course buyout is calculated according to the following guidelines:

$$\text{Cost} = ((F/C) * S) + \text{Fringe}$$

where F is the fraction of a faculty member's differentiated workload dedicated to teaching (typically 0.4) and C is the required annual course commitment in the faculty member's department (typically 5) and S is the faculty member's academic year salary.

Salary savings from an externally funded buy-out

Salary savings resulting from the difference in allocated external funding for the buyout and the actual teaching replacement costs are distributed to the college for use in supporting the college's research agenda.

Special Considerations

In some cases, a funding agency does not allow for course buyouts; the budget is otherwise restricted and cannot accommodate a buyout; the scope of work on the project is unusually demanding; or other extenuating circumstances that would prompt the need for a course buyout. In this case, the Dean and Chair have the flexibility to provide a course buyout at no cost, reduced cost, or the internal cost, or otherwise redistribute the workload in the form of an offload to meet the needs of the investigator.

Internally funded course buy-outs

Course buyouts for campus service roles or other internal sources will be approved by the Chair and Dean documented in a short memo of understanding for the record.

The cost of a single course buyout is calculated according to the following guidelines:

$$\text{Cost} = \$5,500.00$$

Salary savings from an internally funded buy-out

Salary savings resulting from the difference in allocated funding for the buyout and the actual teaching replacement costs remain with the faculty member's primary unit.

Overloads

Faculty receiving an internally funded course buyout shall not be paid for overloads during the same semester. However, exceptions may be granted but only upon prior written approval by the Dean and only upon exceptional circumstances.

Off-Load Incentive Guidelines and Recommendations

In the absence of specific college/school guidelines:

Sponsored Program Large Grant Incentive: Eligible principal investigators are those who receive a single external funding award in the amount of \$300,000 or more in total costs to UCCS that receive the full F&A rate. Each award at or above \$300,000 is eligible. These principal investigators are eligible for a one course reduction at no cost to the investigator in the semester following the closing of the award to facilitate the writing of a renewal application, new application, dissemination, or other research activity as approved by the Dean and Department Chair. Funding for replacement costs will be negotiated between the department and college.

Sponsored Program Accumulation Grant Incentive: Eligible principal investigators are those who accumulate externally funded awards that total \$300,000 in total costs to UCCS that receive at least 8% in F&As. The accumulation of funding must occur within a 5-year time span. These principal investigators are eligible for a one course reduction at no cost to the investigator in the semester following the closing of the award that led to the \$300,000 threshold. The course reduction is meant to facilitate the writing of a renewal application, new application, dissemination, or other research activity as approved by the Dean and Department Chair. Funding for replacement costs will be negotiated between the department and college.

Each college/school is encouraged as follows:

Graduate Student Research Mentoring Incentive: Each college/school is encouraged to set a policy relevant to their unit to reward graduate student mentoring, which may consider quality of mentoring, students making satisfactory progress, and other markers of success. Colleges/schools are encouraged to consider guidelines that provide a course reduction to acknowledge the time investment in providing excellent graduate student mentoring.

Scholarship and Creativity Concentration Incentive: Each college/school is encouraged to set guidelines that provide one course reduction to pre-tenured faculty following the semester of their successful comprehensive review to allow for concentrated time to prepare a book, publication, sponsored program proposal, performance, or exhibit that will enhance the national and international reputation of the scholar and of UCCS.

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