

Faculty Summer Grant Compensation Guidelines

Effective May 2, 2016

Faculty summer grant compensation guidelines are intended to ensure summer grant compensation for faculty is within the rules established by the federal government and Northern Kentucky University. Those rules outline activities that are allowed when faculty are supported on externally funded grants and internal awards. These guidelines should be used unless there are overriding guidelines from a specific granting agency.

Under normal circumstances the maximum amount of summer support a faculty may earn from externally funded grants and contracts and internal awards is the equivalent of 2.5 months. The 2.5 months takes into consideration that faculty take vacation time during the summer months, and the intent of these guidelines is to avoid a conflict in which a faculty member takes vacation during a period when he/she is supported by an external grant.

When a faculty member is earning summer salary from a sponsored project(s) his/her efforts must be committed to work on the sponsored project(s). Faculty members must certify their work in the summer effort reports, the recorded effort must be equivalent to the effort being compensated. For example, a faculty member being compensated at 25% of the 2.5 months must dedicate 25% of his/her work effort to the grant. Additionally, a faculty member being compensated at 100% of the 2.5 months must dedicate 100% of his/her work effort to the grant.

Faculty receiving summer grant compensation may consider modest administrative and operational needs of their departments, centers and NKU. Such *de minimis* exceptions may include engaging in communications through various channels, as well as attending occasional and essential meetings. Such non-grant activities should not constitute a major use of time for grant supported faculty, and faculty must apply their good judgment in the use of their time during periods of 100% grant support to make sure that grant funds are appropriately and wisely applied. Activities should not include writing competitive proposals.

Full-time faculty with nine-month academic appointments may request summer salary for work on a sponsored project during the summer months. Summer salary is calculated at the rate of 1/9th of the academic year salary for each month of summer salary requested, up to a maximum of 2.5/9ths of the academic year salary for 2.5 months of summer work. Fringe benefits must be included in the summer salary calculations (FICA is the only fringe benefit required on summer pay for full-time faculty: 7.65%). Because NKU's academic year begins on or around August 15th, summer salary calculations should be calculated from the base salary for the previous academic year.

Example: a faculty member has a base salary of \$70,000 and wants to request 1 month of summer salary:

1 month summer salary	$\$70,000/9$	\$7,778
FICA on 1 month summer salary	$\$7,778*7.65\%$	\$595.01
	Total request (direct costs):	\$8,373.01

*Please note that this summer salary calculation only includes direct costs. Salary and wages are subject to indirect costs

The summer salary guidelines apply to all sponsored projects. Full time faculty who charge up to 2.5 months of their salary, as budgeted in the grant, should refer to this as “**summer salary**” not “**stipend**.” These guidelines are consistent with federal agencies and most foundations. The federal government does not sanction the use of the term stipend for any charges to federal agreements (including federal funds passed through state & local government and/or corporations) except in the very limited case of student traineeships.

Full-time faculty with nine-month appointments may receive summer salary for work on a sponsored project during the summer months as follows:

1. Summer salary is allowable subject to the regulations of the funding agency.
2. Faculty who receive Summer Salary must expend the effort associated with the Summer Salary during the summer period. Effort expended during the academic year does not satisfy a commitment related to the receipt of Summer Salary.
3. The maximum amount of Summer Salary permissible is 2.5-ninths of the faculty’s regular academic year salary. In other words, in any year, a faculty member may receive no more than 2.5 months of Summer Salary.
 - Summer Salary funded by the National Science Foundation (one of the few exceptions) is limited to two months, or *two-ninths* of the regular academic year salary.
 - Each month of Summer Salary represents one month of full-time effort.
 - If an investigator receives 2.5 months of summer salary from sponsored accounts, the funding agencies do not allow time to write proposals, work on other research, teach summer courses, or perform significant administrative work beyond *de minimis* activity described above.
4. The rate for Summer Salary is the same as the rate for the regular academic year salary.
5. In any sponsored project application for Summer Salary, the budget justification must state explicitly that the salary listed in the budget for the faculty in question represents a portion of his or her Summer Salary.
6. Summer Salary should be requested on the Faculty Summer Salary Request Form and should be signed by the faculty member, Principal Investigator, Chair, Dean and Provost.

FAQ's

Is there any case in which a faculty member can take three months of summer salary from sponsored accounts?

NKU allows this on a limited basis with prior approval from the chair, dean, and Vice Provost for Graduate Education, Research and Outreach. During this three-month period you may only expend effort on the grants/contracts that are funding your work – with the *de minimis* exceptions noted above – no other effort or vacation days are allowed. To secure this approval you will need to specify all of your planned activities during this time period and certify that only activities directly related to the sponsored project will be undertaken during the funded period. You will need to back this up with your summer quarter effort report. NKU strongly discourages taking three full months of summer salary from sponsored accounts.

What if I've specifically committed (or been awarded) three or more summer months on sponsored projects?

If three full months of summer effort have been committed to/awarded by sponsors, the corresponding sponsored accounts may fund the three months of summer salary, in accordance with the approval process stated above.

If I am paid three months of summer salary from sponsored projects, can I write proposals or do substantial administrative work that is not grant-related?

No. If an investigator receives three months of summer salary from sponsored accounts, the funding agencies do not allow time to write proposals, work on other research, teach summer courses or perform significant administrative work beyond *de minimis* activity described above.

Do I have to be at the University during the summer?

In general no, but faculty engaged in grant related summer salary support are expected to be at the University for the period of grant related summer salary support, with exceptions for travel to conferences, meetings with collaborators, or off-campus work (for example, data collection at a remote site or research at another institution) that are related to the sponsored project(s) from which your summer salary is drawn.

While I am 100% grant funded, may I use the hours I work beyond 40 hours each week (evenings and weekends) for administrative tasks, summer teaching, or writing proposals?

No, other than the *de minimis* effort described earlier. Federal agencies and NKU measure effort, not time – we don't keep records of hours worked. If your effort is typically more than 40 hours per week or includes evenings or weekends, then all of that effort constitutes 100%; if you are full time on a grant for a period of time, that 100% is defined as full time. To some this sounds like the University – really, the grant agency – is buying all of our waking hours, work and leisure. The principle is actually straight forward: if the grant is providing 100% of your summer support for some time period, it is buying all of your work effort (save *de minimis* activities as

discussed above), as you normally define it, no matter when it is expended – days, nights, weekends. That doesn't mean the grant is buying your relaxation time – just the time you define as work.