

Modified Duties Proposal for Inclusion in Faculty Handbook
Approved by Faculty Senate at the March 28, 2016 Meeting

MODIFIED DUTIES

The university recognizes the need for tenured and tenure-track faculty to balance professional and personal commitments. Special family circumstances, for example, the birth or adoption of a child, severe illness or death of an immediate family member, or even issues of personal health, can create the need for a modified workload and flexible schedule for a period of time.

Since the circumstances may vary widely, this policy does not prescribe the exact nature of the accommodation. In many cases, it may be a reduction or elimination of a teaching assignment while the faculty member continues to meet ongoing, but more flexible research and service obligations. In general, the commitment is to work with a faculty member to devise a modified workload and schedule that enables the individual to remain an active and productive member of the department. **Because there is no reduction in salary, the faculty member is expected to have a set of full-time responsibilities.**

The modified duties policy applies only to tenure and tenure-track faculty and is available upon employment. An eligible faculty member should speak with his or her department chair as soon as possible about the need for modified duties to ensure the maximum amount of planning time. The department chair, in consultation with the relevant dean, is responsible for working with the faculty member to ensure a fair plan for modified duties is implemented if possible, that budgetary constraints are considered, and that student or other needs are met. The policy does not create an entitlement if there are legitimate business-related reasons for denying the request. Final decisions about the nature of the modified duties are the responsibility of the department chair in consultation with the dean. The request form is available on the Provost's website. The period of modified duties is generally one semester, although an additional semester may be requested in unusual circumstances. A request to extend the probationary period may be made by submitting the appropriate form (also available on the Provost's website). The extension may be requested as a complement to a request for modified duties. However, the semester of modified duties does not automatically affect the tenure probationary period.

Provisions of this policy cannot adequately address all individual circumstances. Sick leave (including disability), leave without pay, or permanent reduction in appointment to part-time status may be options to consider for longer-term or more demanding needs. A semester of modified duties should be considered *in addition to*, not as a substitute for, sick leave or family leave. There are no work expectations for individuals on approved sick or family leave. Medical documentation is required if the period of modified duties is requested related to a health issue not addressed by sick leave.

Modified duties should not result in additional duties during the subsequent semester, e.g., the faculty member should not be asked to make up the released teaching before or after the semester of modified duties. This policy is not intended to provide release time from teaching for the purpose of allowing additional time for research. The faculty member cannot be employed by another institution during the period of modified duties, nor can the release time be used for extensive professional travel or other increased professional activities (including consulting) that do not meet the goals of the policy. Requests for outside consulting during the period of modified duties are not normally approved.

Approval of the department head or chair, dean, and provost are necessary. If the department chair does not support the request, the reasons for denial must be provided in writing, and the request is automatically forwarded to the dean for further review.