

GUIDANCE MEMO NO. 01-23



Research, Grants and Contracts

DATE: September 16, 2022

TO: Research Faculty & Staff

SUBJECT: Release Time Calculations Used for Grant
Proposal Budgets

Purpose: This guidance provides information to research faculty and staff to use in developing proposal budgets when a portion or all of the requested faculty salaries plan to use release time to allow for effort on an external grant project during the academic/contract period.

Action Requested: Calculate faculty release time applied to a research proposal budget as a % of the actual contracted salary (12.5% for 1 course release based on 4/4 load, etc) and associated fringe benefit costs.

Summary and Background: NKU faculty are encouraged to utilize non-contract days (summer months) to provide effort for externally funded research projects; however, in some instances and dependent on the timeline of the research tasks, it is necessary to provide effort during the contract period or academic year – which necessitates the need for release time.

Release time is the period a faculty member is released from a portion of the normal teaching load to perform other duties, such as grant related tasks. For purposes of this guidance, release time pertains to time being purchased with funds resulting from an award of a grant, cooperative agreement or contract.

NKU policy indicates that faculty can be reassigned/released from a percent of their time to work on a grant. The amount of time will be stated as a percent of their class teaching load. Although it is rare, exempt staff may also be reassigned/released from a percent of their time to work on a grant, as well. Faculty should follow the prescribed process to request any release time through their respective units.

When developing a proposal budget for submission to an external agency and faculty release time is being requested, the release time calculation will be based on a percentage of the salary and fringe benefits associated with the faculty member at a rate of 12.5% per 1 course release (based on a 4/4 teaching load). For example, if the contract salary is \$80,000 per year and the faculty is requesting a 1 course release in the Spring semester, then for purposes of the proposal budget...\$20,000 per year will be requested. ($\$80,000 \times 25.0\% = \$10,000$). Then, the associated fringe benefits (related to the faculty) will be applied to that budgeted salary to be included on the proposal, as well.

If the proposal results in an award of funding and the Principal Investigator plans to utilize the funding in a manner different than how it is calculated at the proposal development stage (as described above), then approval is required from the Office of the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs prior to making any internal budget modifications.