

Commission on Faculty Affairs  
Policy on Modified Duties  
Resolution 2005-06 B

Approved by CFA:	February 10, 2006 w/ revisions 3-17-06
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Approved Board of Visitors:	June 12, 2006 w/amendments
Effective:	Fall 2006

WHEREAS, many department heads have informally negotiated workload accommodations for tenured or tenure-track faculty members with extenuating personal or family circumstances for many years, but the availability of such accommodations is inconsistent within departments and across the university; and

WHEREAS, adoption of a policy on modified duties brings visibility to the issue and transparency to the process, and clearly signals the university's commitment to assisting faculty members to achieve a more manageable balance of family and professional commitments;

THEREFORE be it resolved, that the proposed policy on modified duties for tenured and tenure-track faculty members be approved and incorporated in the Faculty Handbook. Once approved, the policy should have wide dissemination. The Provost will provide a summary of activity (including cost) annually to the Academic Affairs Committee of the Board of Visitors.

Modified Duties

The university recognizes the need for all tenured and tenure track faculty members to balance the commitments of family and work. Special family circumstances, for example, birth or adoption of a child, severe illness of an immediate family member, or even issues of personal health, can cause substantial alterations to one's daily routine, thus creating a need to construct a modified workload and flexible schedule for a period of time.

Since the circumstances may vary widely for faculty members at different stages of their careers and with different family and workload situations, this policy does not prescribe the exact nature of the accommodation. In many cases, it may be a reduction or elimination of teaching assignment while the faculty member continues to meet on-going, but more flexible research and graduate student supervision obligations. In general, the commitment is to work with a faculty member to devise a modified workload and schedule that enables the faculty member 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.

An eligible faculty member is encouraged to speak with his/her department head as soon as possible about the need for modified duties in order to ensure the maximum amount of time for planning. A department chair, in conjunction with the relevant dean, is responsible for working with a faculty member to ensure a fair plan for modified duties is implemented if possible, budgetary constraints are considered, and 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.

Some individual circumstances cannot be adequately addressed by the provisions of this policy. Sick leave (including disability), leave without pay, or permanent reduction in appointment to part-time status may be options that must be considered for longer-term or more demanding needs. This policy is not intended to provide release time from teaching for the purpose of allowing additional time for research. Reduction in teaching assignment for research purposes is the prerogative of the department and a function of the university's program of study-research leaves.

Extension of the probationary period (see section 2.8.2.1 of the Faculty Handbook) is available for those faculty members on tenure-track appointments who are confronted with extenuating personal or family circumstances, or birth or adoption of a child. 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.

#### Eligibility:

Modified duties may be requested by any faculty member in a full-time tenured or tenure-track appointment (or continued appointment track) for the purpose of managing family responsibilities or, in exceptional cases, personal health issues not addressed by sick leave. The policy applies to eligible faculty upon employment.

#### Guidelines:

1. The period of modified duties will be one semester, or an equivalent amount of time for those faculty members whose responsibilities are not tied directly to teaching on the academic calendar.
2. Modification of 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. 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.
3. Medical documentation is required if the period of modified duties is requested related to a health issue not addressed by sick leave.
4. A semester of modified duties should be considered IN ADDITION TO, not as a substitute for, sick leave and family leave available to those giving birth or adopting during the period of the appointment (i.e. during the academic year for those on AY appointments, or any time for those on CY appointments). There are no work expectations for individuals on approved sick or family leave.
6. Requests for outside consulting during the period of modified duties will not normally be approved.

6. Faculty member should submit a request for modified duties as early as possible so the department can plan appropriately. The request form is available on the Provost's website under "Forms." The plan of proposed activities is developed in consultation with the department head/chair and the dean's office. The duties can be department-based or college-based, or a combination thereof.

7. Subject to available funding, the Provost's Office will provide an allotment to the faculty member's unit to replace teaching (or to use in other ways relevant to the duties) that is lost through the granting of a term of modified duties. Additional support from departments and colleges is strongly encouraged, and should be noted in the request.

8. Requests must be approved by the department head, dean, and provost. If the department head does not support the request, the reasons for denial shall be provided in writing, and the request automatically forwarded to the dean for further review. The provost will provide a summary of activity annually to the academic affairs committee of the Board of Visitors.