

Stony Brook University
College of Arts and Sciences
Research Assignment/Fellowship Policies
(Updated July 2024)

Definition of Research Assignments:

Research Assignment is an arrangement internal to the College of Arts and Sciences where a faculty member is relieved from their teaching obligation to take part in a research opportunity (ie: grant, fellowship, professional development, etc.).

Junior Research Assignment is an arrangement internal to the College made available to tenure track faculty in order to allow time for sustained focus on research, CAS grants relief from teaching responsibilities equivalent to one semester's teaching prior to tenure evaluation.

During a junior or regular research assignment a faculty member remains a full-time employee at SBU and maintains all benefits. A research assignment is **not** a leave of absence or a sabbatical leave. Faculty members are released from teaching but are expected to fulfill all their other obligations, including service to the department and mentoring of students. In general the Department of the faculty member is expected to cover any needed replacement teaching. The College of Arts and Sciences will only provide funds for replacement teaching in case external funding in excess of \$30,000 per semester was obtained by the faculty member.

Other Definitions:

Release time with reduction of Full Time Effort (FTE) is a reduction of the University obligations of a faculty member. If an external fellowship is awarded and the organization requires direct payment to the faculty member, release time may be granted through a reduction in effort. The reduction of effort is determined by the salary support offered through the fellowship relative to the base salary. If an individual's effort and state salary are reduced, there may be benefits implications, and TIAA contributions will be reduced in accordance with the reduced effort.

A reduction of effort is **not** a leave of absence or a sabbatical leave and the faculty member will still need to fulfill all their obligations other than teaching.

Leave without pay is a temporary release from all University obligations. No salary is paid during the leave, the individual is responsible for continuance of benefits and no University contributions are made to TIAA contracts for the leave period.

Full year sabbatical leave: If the faculty member is eligible for a sabbatical, the fellowship support can be used to support a full year sabbatical. This can either be implemented as a reduction of FTE to 50% at half pay for a full academic year or through a combination of a one semester sabbatical followed by one semester of research assignment. Sabbaticals are subject to the Policies of the Board of Trustees on sabbatical leaves.

I. College of Arts & Sciences, Junior Research Assignment Policy

Eligibility

In order to allow time for sustained focus on research, CAS grants tenure track faculty relief from teaching responsibilities equivalent to one semester's teaching prior to tenure evaluation. To receive a one-semester Junior Research Assignment, the faculty member must show evidence of having applied or intending to apply for external grant or fellowship funding, though success in securing this funding is NOT a requirement for the research assignment. The research assignment should not be used during the last year prior to the tenure decision, in order to ensure adequate opportunity for the faculty member's teaching and service to be evaluated for the tenure dossier; exceptions to this policy require approval of the chair and dean. Acceptance of a Junior Research Assignment carries with it a commitment to return to the faculty for no less than one year. Faculty members who received a "phased in" level of teaching equivalent to a normal half year load are not eligible for the junior research assignment. Note that the Junior Research Assignment does not constitute an extension of time to tenure, which may be granted under special circumstances. See information about Extension to Time Tenure.

Application procedure

The faculty member provides the chair with:

- Junior research assignment application;
- a 1-2 page summary of the program of work to be completed during the research assignment and the outcomes expected;
- information on the funding application: the name of the funding agency and relevant program, funds requested, submission date, and brief project summary.

If the faculty member's research activities require them to be off campus during the research assignment, that should be discussed and approved in advance. Applications require endorsement by the chair and the dean, and the teaching needs of the department will be taken into account in determining the timing of the leave.

Deadlines

The request for a junior research assignment must be submitted to the Dean's office **by October 8** of the year preceding the requested research assignment (for either fall or spring semester). If the submission date for the funding application is later than October 8, the application should include a preliminary summary of the proposed project application.

External Funding

If the faculty member's application for external funding is successful, those funds will be placed in the Dean's pool used to help defray the costs of replacement instructors in departments that cannot cover teaching releases internally. Extension of the research assignment for an additional semester is possible according to the guidelines in Section II.

II. College of Arts and Sciences Policy on Research Assignments in Connection with Prestigious Awards/Fellowships (updated Summer 2024)

Faculty in the College of Arts and Sciences are encouraged to take advantage of the many opportunities for research support available through foundations, governmental agencies, nonprofit organizations, universities, and other sources. Among the most well-known of these are fellowships offered through the Guggenheim Foundation, the American Council of Learned Societies, the National Endowment of the Humanities, National Endowment for the Arts, the Institute of International Education (Fulbright), the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study, as well as others.

Once an external funded fellowship is awarded, a faculty member can apply for a research assignment in order to make full use of the opportunity, while remaining a full time employee of the university. If the fellowship is paid directly to the faculty member, they will have to either request a reduction of effort or a leave without pay.

Eligibility

Any faculty member with a position in the College of Arts and Sciences may request support related to an external award/fellowship for the duration of the fellowship. The faculty member must show evidence of having secured external funding and submit an application through their department and with support from their department chair. If the fellowship payment can be sent directly to the university the faculty member must apply for a research assignment. If the sponsor requires that it must be paid directly to the faculty member, the faculty member may request a reduction of effort or a leave without pay.

Application procedure

The faculty member provides the chair with:

- An application for a research assignment, reduction of effort, or leave without pay.
- A 1-2-page summary of the program of work to be completed during the research assignment and the outcomes expected.
- For a research assignment a fellowship billing questionnaire must be submitted, if the faculty member will remain on SBU payroll and fellowship payment sent to the University.

If the department chair endorses the request, the application including the endorsement are submitted to the dean for approval.

Deadlines

All requests for research assignments should be submitted to department chairs as part of the regular yearly request process. Specifically, faculty should make proposals to their chair regarding FTE reductions, leave without pay, research assignments or sabbatical leave prior to the standard College of Arts and Sciences **deadline of October 8 of the academic year preceding the proposed leave year**. This includes opportunities for which funding has not yet been awarded. It is at the discretion of the dean to accept any requests at a later time during the academic year.

External Funding

Many fellowship opportunities offer salary support, which is usually less than the faculty member's normal Stony Brook University salary and benefits for an equivalent period of time. Unless the organization providing the funds will only directly pay the faculty member, the organization will be invoiced for the salary support and the funds will be deposited into an income fund reimbursable (IFR) account designated by the Dean to offset the faculty member's salary. If the salary support exceeds the salary of the faculty member for the period of the fellowship, the funds in excess of the faculty member's base salary will be paid out to the faculty member either as summer salary or as a salary supplement during the academic year.

In cases where the organization providing the salary support pays the faculty member directly, the faculty member will either request a reduction of effort or a leave without pay.

In general, the college does not provide adjunct funds to cover replacement teaching for faculty members supported by fellowships. It is the responsibility of the department to make sure that all necessary courses are offered during the research assignment of a faculty member. This needs to be considered in the approval process. However, if the salary support or the reduction of effort amounts to more than \$30,000 per semester, the Dean's office will provide the department with support corresponding to half a TA line per semester, currently \$13,000. These funds can be deployed in support of the department at the discretion of the chair, including for replacement teaching.

Other Terms and Conditions:

If the faculty member's research activities require them to be off campus during the research assignment, that should be discussed and approved in advance. Applications require

endorsement by the chair and the dean, and the teaching needs of the department will be taken into account in determining the timing of the leave.