

College of Sciences
Standard Operating Procedures

SOP HR.13.00	Scholarly Reassignment FAQs
Owner/Contact Information:	College of Sciences, Human Resources, 919-515-3487
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Related Policies/Links:	COS Scholarly Reassignment Process Map REG 05.20.24 – Scholarly Reassignment for Faculty REG 05.58.01 – Additional Compensation Paid through the University UNC Policy Manual - Guidelines on Reassigned Time for Faculty

1. Purpose/Introduction

The scholarly reassignment SOP FAQ's are intended to guide employees through all processes pertaining to EHRA faculty scholarly reassignment. College of Science Human Resources (COS HR) is available to answer questions or provide guidance regarding EHRA faculty scholarly reassignment.

2. Definitions

Academic Year Appointment: also known as 9-month appointments, begin August 16 and end May 15. 9-month academic-year appointments have no contractual work obligation for the summer.

At-Will Appointment: An appointment may be designated as "at will," which is subject to continuation or discontinuation at the discretion of the Chancellor or Chancellor's designee. This type of appointment is for an indefinite term.

COS: College of Sciences

COS HR: Abbreviation for College of Sciences, Human Resources Office

Department Representative: The person submitting any action on behalf of their department or center

Fiscal Year Appointment: Also known as 12-month appointments. Fiscal Year appointments may begin at any time of the year but are usually for the period of July 1 through June 30.

ORP - Optional Retirement Program

Scholarly Reassignment - An assignment that is requested by the faculty member for the purpose of permitting the faculty member to engage in activities that are not part of his or her normal academic assignments and that are designed to enable them to concentrate their efforts on recent developments in special areas of scholarly interest and to maintain high professional competence.

TSERS - Teachers' and State Employees' Retirement System

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3. Procedures

3.1 Scholarly Reassignment FAQ's for Faculty

1. What is a scholarly reassignment?

A scholarly reassignment is an assignment that is requested by the faculty member for the purpose of permitting the faculty member to engage in activities that are not part of his or her normal academic assignments and that are designed to enable them to concentrate their efforts on recent developments in special areas of scholarly interest and to maintain high professional competence.

2. What is not considered a scholarly reassignment?

A change in normal academic assignments that occur as a result of teaching rotations, temporary administrative assignments, or other circumstances in the course of university operations that may result in a faculty member having a reduced teaching assignment for one semester does not constitute a scholarly reassignment. **A leave without pay, during which the employer paid benefits are not permitted, does not constitute a scholarly reassignment.**

3. Who is eligible a scholarly reassignment?

Full time tenured and tenure-track faculty members and permanent full-time, benefits eligible professional faculty with .75 FTE or greater are eligible. Retired faculty and EHRA professionals are not eligible. There is not a leave of service requirement to be eligible for Scholarly Reassignment.

4. What is full pay and partial pay while on Scholarly Reassignment?

Full pay - The University will continue funding for both retirement contributions and employee health insurance premiums the same as prior to the Scholarly Reassignment. The faculty member is required to continue making his/her employee pre-tax contributions to TSERS/ORP and health insurance premiums (if applicable) through payroll deduction.

Partial Pay - The University will continue funding employee health insurance premiums the same as prior to the Scholarly Reassignment. The University will continue funding the retirement contributions provided the employee chooses to continue participation in retirement while on the Scholarly Reassignment with partial pay. *If the faculty member is taking Scholarly Reassignment with partial pay, for less than half pay, you must contact the Benefits Office to confirm that the proposed funding meets IRS requirements.

5. How long can a faculty member be on a scholarly reassignment and what are the salary terms and conditions?

An academic year (9 month) faculty member may be granted a scholarly reassignment for one semester at full salary or for one academic year at half salary. Nine-month faculty may be granted a scholarly reassignment for one academic year at less than half salary provided the compensation arrangement does not compromise IRS limits governing retirement contributions or other pre-tax benefit arrangements

A fiscal year (12 month) faculty member may be granted a scholarly reassignment for 6 months at full salary or for 12 months at half salary. Twelve-month faculty may be granted a scholarly reassignment for 12 months at less than half salary provided the compensation arrangement does not compromise IRS limits governing retirement contributions or other pre-tax benefit arrangements

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6. Can a tenure track faculty member extend the tenure clock if they are approved for a scholarly reassignment?

A tenure-track faculty member who wishes to extend the tenure clock in the event a scholarly reassignment is approved must make a written request to the department head when submitting the request for the scholarly reassignment. If the department head and the dean determine that a tenure clock extension is justified, the request will be submitted to the Provost as stipulated in [REG 05.20.31 Tenure Clock](#). The Provost's decision on the tenure clock extension is final.

7. Does a scholarly reassignment require working at another institution/location or can it be an intellectual reassignment that does not involve a physical reassignment?

It does not need to be in another location, but it needs to have the potential to yield outcomes: e.g. a book, article, creative expression, or new academic or outreach program. Also see the UNC Policy Manual: [Guidelines on Reassigned Time for Faculty](#).

8. What documents are required to request a scholarly reassignment?

The faculty member requests scholarly reassignment by submitting a [Scholarly Reassignment Form](#) to the Department Head. The Form must include a statement describing the expected benefits from the reassignment to the university.

If the Department Head supports the request and per COS guidelines, the Department Head must provide a written recommendation of approval in the form of a memo or letter indicating support for the scholarly reassignment.

9. What is the timeline to submit a request for scholarly reassignment?

Please submit the request to your Department Head at least one semester before the leave begins in order to plan for teaching and advising needs for each semester. The sooner the Department Head is aware of the request, the sooner planning can begin for teaching and advising while the faculty member is on leave.

10. Who approves the scholarly reassignment request?

If the Department Head supports the request, the Head will approve and sign the [Scholarly Reassignment Form](#) and will forward the form, written recommendation of approval, and other associated attachments, to the Department Representative so they can review the form for accuracy and signatures.

The Dean will review the request and written recommendation of approval from the Department Head. Once approved by the Dean, the Dean will approve and sign the request form and will then send it to the Department Representative & COS HR. See the [COS Scholarly Reassignment Process Map](#).

11. What does a Department Head need to consider when reviewing the scholarly leave request for a professional faculty member?

Points of consideration should include:

- Contract status: Leave can only be granted to faculty who are under an active contract.
- Contract length: Is it long enough to require a SFR (see [section 7](#) in the Professional Faculty policy)? Is the contract, at minimum, long enough to meet the requirement to return to service for at least one semester immediately following the scholarly reassignment (see [section 4.4](#) of the policy)?

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- Permanent status: According to University Benefits, permanent status terminology speaks to either EHRA or SHRA employees on a 9-month contract basis or greater and >.749 FTE. For example, a faculty member on just a semester appointment would not be considered permanent.

12. Are there any salary implications while on scholarly reassignment?

During the period of paid scholarly reassignment, the faculty member's salary from the university may not exceed his/her regular full-time salary.

13. Who do I contact for questions regarding program and project grants?

For more information regarding your contracts and grants, please contact your Department L-5 Accounting Tech and Business Officer to plan for your contracts/grants Business Officers should contact Research Administration if the absence of PI effort is or more than three consecutive months and/or if there is a 25% reduction in effort on the project.

14. Who do I contact for questions regarding benefits and IRS tax implications?

For more information regarding your benefits and IRS tax implications, please contact the [University Benefits Office](#).

15. Does the faculty member have to return back to work after the scholarly reassignment has ended?

Upon termination of the scholarly reassignment the faculty member must either return to the university for the required full semester, enter phased retirement, or obtain a waiver from the Provost. A faculty member who fails to do one of the options previously mentioned, will be responsible for repaying the university the amount of salary and benefits he or she received from the university during the scholarly reassignment. See [REG 05.20.24, section 4.4](#).

16. What will happen if the faculty member does not return back to the University?

Without a waiver from the Provost, a faculty member who fails to return to the university will be responsible for repaying the university the amount of salary and benefits he or she received from the university during the scholarly reassignment.

17. What is a regular assignment?

Regular assignment is defined as the same research, teaching, and additional assignments for which the faculty member was responsible prior to the beginning of the scholarly reassignment

18. How often should faculty members pursue a scholarly reassignment?

Recognizing that the pursuit of developments in faculty's special areas of scholarly interest often requires concentrated efforts which are not usually possible during long periods of heavy teaching loads and other campus responsibilities, colleges and departments are encouraged to foster, when possible, scholarly reassignments for their faculty members at intervals of about seven (7) years.

19. How many scholarly reassignments can a faculty member have?

A scholarly reassignment is considered as an approved absence for educational purposes. [§G.S. 135-8\(b\)\(5\)](#) provides that an employee can continue retirement contributions and have a career total of up to six (6) years of approved educational leave.

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20. Does the faculty member have to report back to the department the outcome and activities performed during the scholarly reassignment?

Yes, by the end of the semester following the faculty member's return, he or she must prepare and submit a written report to the department head describing the activities undertaken during the scholarly reassignment, and prepare and present a seminar to the department, college, or university community.

21. Can a nine-month faculty member receive additional compensation during summer while on scholarly reassignment?

Yes. Nine-month faculty are not considered to be on *leave* (i.e. scholarly reassignment) during the summer months because of the nine-month appointment.

Request for payment to the employee for summer salary must be authorized by the department head (or designee) in advance and [may be submitted](#) as additional compensation by the paying department before the effort has been completed.

Regarding summer salary for full-time 9-month faculty paid in summer from sponsored projects funds, additional compensation above the base salary is allowable, provided that such activities are specifically required by the agreement with the Project Sponsor and approved in advance, in writing, by the Department Head and Dean (not designee), in accordance with federal regulations. Effort for which non-instructional summer salary will be paid must be approved by the Department Head and Dean (or designee) before the work begins. The COS Standard Operating Procedure for [Summer Salary for Nine-Month Faculty](#) provides approval and reporting procedures for faculty and administrative staff involved with sponsored projects. For any change in effort or planned work schedule, a new approval is required.

22. Can a twelve-month faculty appointment receive additional compensation during summer while on scholarly reassignment?

No. Twelve-month faculty may not receive additional compensation from a sponsored project **unless** written into the initial grant proposal as compensation beyond Base Salary, **or unless** otherwise approved in advance by both the Project Sponsor and the faculty member's Department Head and Dean (not designee).

23. How should the faculty member notify the Department Head regarding the summer effort plan for a sponsored project?

The faculty member should draft a written summer plan of effort with the Department Head and attach the plan to the scholarly reassignment form on a separate sheet of paper along with the written recommendation of approval from the Department Head.

24. If my request is denied, can I appeal it?

Yes, a faculty member may appeal a denied request for scholarly reassignment to the Provost. Please contact Associate Vice Provost for Academic Personnel and Policy within the [Office of Faculty Development](#) for more information on how to appeal a denied request for Scholarly Reassignment.

3.2 Scholarly Reassignment FAQ's for Faculty

1. Does the Scholarly reassignment need to be supported by the department head?

Yes, scholarly reassignments must be supported by the department head and approved by the Dean according to the procedures set forth in [REG 05.20.24 – Scholarly Reassignment for Faculty](#). Per COS guidelines, the Department Head must provide a written recommendation of approval in the form of a memo or letter indicating support for the scholarly reassignment.

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The Department Head will sign and then forward the Scholarly Reassignment Form and written recommendation of approval to the Department Representative (see 3.1, FAQ 10).

2. What information does the Department Head need to include in the written recommendation of approval?

The Department Head should include how the scholarly reassignment will benefit the University **and** how the scholarly reassignment will benefit the faculty member's career development.

3. Who will notify the faculty member of the approval or denial of the Scholarly Reassignment Request?

After the Dean's Office send the fully approved and signed request form, via email, back to the Departmental Representative and to COS HR, the Departmental Representative will forward a copy to the Department Head and Faculty Member so that all parties involved will be notified of the approval or denial at the same time.

3.3 Scholarly Reassignment FAQ's for Departmental Representative and COS HR

1. What is the responsibility of the Department Representative as it relates to Scholarly Reassignment Requests?

The Department Representative will receive the completed form & letter from the Department Head, including necessary signatures. The Department Representative is responsible for reviewing the form for accuracy, ensuring the request satisfies, the eligibility, procedures, and terms & conditions of [REG 05.20.24 – Scholarly Reassignment for Faculty](#).

The Departmental Representative will then forward the Scholarly Reassignment Form and written recommendation of approval to the Dean for the Dean's approval and signature.

2. Who will process the Scholarly Reassignment into the Human Resources System/PeopleSoft?

Once approved by the Dean, the College of Sciences Human Resources Specialist will process the Scholarly Reassignment in the HR Systems via Job Data by using the instructions listed in the [Processing Scholarly Reassignments](#) guide to ensure timely reporting and dissemination of benefits information. The College of Sciences Human Resources Specialist is also responsible for adding the scholarly reassignment to the leave tracking for COS HR actions.

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4. Changes and Review

Subsection	Summary of Changes	Date
Whole Document	Transferred FAQ document format into SOP format.	July 22, 2019
Whole Document	Replaced "Department HR Partner" with "Department Representative"	September 23, 2019
3.1, FAQ 8	Edited "forms" to be "documents" to capture forms & memos as a whole	September 23, 2019
3.1, FAQ 17	Removed the statement that COS HR is responsible for tracking the number of scholarly reassignment a faculty member has taken.	September 23, 2019
3.1, FAQ 17	Added link to reference §G.S. 135-8(b)(5).	September 23, 2019
3.1, FAQ 19	Removed statements related only to teaching overload. Added link to NCSU HRIM Additional Comp.	September 23, 2019
Related Policies/Links, 3.1, FAQ 10	Added link for Process Map	September 23, 2019
3.1, FAQ 17	Inserted a new FAQ #17 to clarify how often faculty members should pursue scholarly reassignment	September 30, 2019
3.3.1	Edited response to FAQ	September 30, 2019
3.1, FAQ 8, FAQ 10	Updated link to current Scholarly Reassignment Form	November 7, 2019
FAQ 15	Corrected the answer to include REG 05.20.24, section 4.4.	December 9, 2019
FAQ 16	Edited the answer to begin: "Without a waiver from the Provost,..."	December 9, 2019
FAQ 11	Added new FAQ to address Professional Faculty requests	December 9, 2019
Whole Document	Changed NTT and Non-Tenure Track to Professional Faculty	September 10, 2020
Related Policies/Links	Updated link to Process Map	October 13, 2020