

March 4, 2014

MEMORANDUM

TO: Tenured, Tenure-Track, and Full-time Non Tenure-Track Faculty
College of Liberal and Fine Arts

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FROM: Daniel J. Gelo
Dean

RE: College Support for Faculty Research and Creative Activity

Thanks mainly to the hard work and resourcefulness of the faculty, research and creative accomplishments in our College are on the increase. The College of Liberal and Fine Arts (COLFA) continues to make fine progress in enhancing its research profile as The University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA) advances toward a research-intensive classification.

This memo is an updated version of the Dean's memo "College Support for Faculty Research" issued on March 4, 2011 and replaces that previous memo effective immediately. It highlights:

- Resources available in the College to support faculty research and creative activity.
- Detailed information about the College **policies** and **procedures** for the distribution of research and creative activity support resources.

An important step before advancing a request for support is to become familiar with these policies and procedures. Please file this memo for future reference and consult it before requesting support. Failure to follow these guidelines may result in lost support opportunities.

Resources Available in the College

Essentially, there are **three forms** of college support: I) release time (i.e., course releases); II) funding; and III) assistance with grant proposals.

I) Dean's Discretionary Course Releases

- Dean's discretionary course releases are accumulated, according to UT System workload policy, in proportion to semester credit hour generation; thus, the College has an ample supply of these releases.

A. By Annual COLFA Workload Agreement

1. Baseline Research Course Releases

Eligible: Tenured and Tenure-Track Faculty

- Because of the abundance of releases, it is possible for the College to depart from the UT System standard teaching requirement of **three** courses each semester and institute a baseline annual course load of **2-2**; technically, everyone who has a **2-2** teaching load is automatically receiving **one** Dean's discretionary course release per semester, every semester, for additional research and creative activity time. Baseline course reduction requires a certain minimum demonstrated rate of research productivity, as outlined in the COLFA Workload Policy. Annual course load is determined in consultation with the department chair via the annual workload agreement process.

Eligible: Full-time Non Tenure-Track Faculty

- Full-time non tenure-track faculty normally carry a **4-4** course load but may be awarded discretionary course releases for research and creative activity or service, upon recommendation from the department chair.

2. Additional Course Releases

Eligible: Tenured and Tenure-Track Faculty

- Additional releases are also available to support even more research-related activity when there is a compelling reason, such as completion of a publication needed for tenure or completion of an externally-funded project. Additional releases are awarded upon recommendation from the department chair, via the annual workload agreement process.

B. Faculty Development Leave

Eligible: Tenured and Tenure-Track Faculty with at least three year's service

- The Dean's Office administers a Faculty Development Leave (FDL) program authorized by the Provost's Office in which multiple Dean's discretionary course releases are awarded to allow a full semester, or two consecutive half-semesters, of release time in support of special research and creative activity, teaching preparations, or service efforts.
- Faculty applying for FDL submit a full proposal to their department chair for approval and forwarding to the Dean's Office. Proposals are subject to rigorous peer review by the College Research Committee FDL subcommittee, and leaves are awarded competitively. A fixed proportion of faculty is permitted to be on FDL at any time, allowing up to 11 awards annually. Per the COLFA FDL policy, all

awardees are required to submit a report about the completion of their project at the end of their leave period.

- The COLFA Associate Dean for Faculty Support issues the call for FDL proposals on or about December 1, proposals are typically due on February 1, and awards are announced on or about March 1.
- There will always be limits on the number of course releases than can be granted. Releases are awarded judiciously because they entail additional costs to the College. Examples of these costs include: salary of replacement adjunct instructors; extra time and effort of department chairs who must locate, contract, and evaluate replacement instructors; increased enrollments in colleagues' courses. There is also the risk that if a sufficient number and range of courses are not offered in a given timeframe, student time to degree and degree completion rates will suffer.

II) Research Funding

- Funds for faculty research support in the College come from several sources:

A. Annual Travel Allocation

There is an annual allocation to the College for faculty travel, which is reallocated directly to the departments on a per-capita basis. The College usually increases this annual allocation by 100% or more out of whatever temporary lapsed salary funds are available. Even so, the per-person awards for travel are not large. The departments distribute these regular travel funds according to their own policies.

B. Facilities and Administrative (F&A) Costs

Another important source of funds for research and creative activity support is F&A money. When UTSA gets a grant, the award total sometimes includes charges for the overhead associated with the funded research. Portions of these charges are then returned to involved units, including the principle investigator(s), their department, and their college. The availability of these charges to COLFA is occasional at best, as many of the grants programs supporting the COLFA disciplines do not provide F&A support. Accordingly, the amounts in these accounts fluctuate continually depending on when grants are won, whether the grants include F&A, and their amounts. COLFA reinvests its entire share of F&A to stimulate faculty research and creative activity, distributing the funds on an annual basis. For example, in Fiscal Year 2013, \$23,372 was distributed to support worthy proposals from 23 faculty members.

C. Gifts to the Dean's Office

Occasionally, the Dean's Office receives gift donations for its general use. These funds are most often used for scholarships and emergency student support, but have sometimes been applied to faculty research funding requests.

D. Technology Allocations

The College occasionally receives funds for technology upgrades. These limited funds are primarily for the routine maintenance and replacement of computers in our offices and labs, but sometimes can be applied to hardware or software purchases for specific faculty research projects.

- Additional seed grants are provided by the Office of the Vice President for Research (OVPR). These programs are pending the availability of funding. Current programs open to COLFA faculty include the INTRA and GREAT programs. The COLFA Research Committee and the Dean's Office provide preliminary rankings of proposals for these programs, although final decisions rest with the OVPR. COLFA faculty should familiarize themselves with these opportunities by consulting <http://research.utsa.edu/funding/index.php>.

Activities Eligible for College Research Funding

Release time and funding may be requested by faculty in support of individual or collaborative scholarly programs. Examples of activity that the Dean's Office generally considers for funding include:

- travel to professional society conferences (national and international), archives, field sites, funding agencies or to work with grant co-investigators;
- experiments; interviews; data collection and analysis;
- publication costs such as for illustrations or subventions;
- symposia organized by UTSA faculty and held on or near campus, including workshops for the translation of research through teaching or service.

Priority is given to projects which will lead directly to publication or exhibition or to submission of significant external grants. In all cases, there should be an explicit improvement in the research record of the College because of funding. Requests to fund meals at conferences receive lowest prioritization, and are also subject to accounting limitations.

Timing of Funding Requests

The Associate Dean for Faculty Support will issue one call for proposals annually once the college has received its F&A share, which typically occurs between October and January. The call for proposals will specify a three-week application window. Proposals may request funding for activities between January 1 and December 31 of the upcoming year. There will be one award announcement covering all requests. Whatever funds are available for the year will be distributed evenly across all approved proposals in this one instance. For example, if the total of funding requests is double the total amount available in the college, each proposal will be funded at half.

Faculty are encouraged to plan their proposals well in advance of the fundable activity and to consider requests for funding as part of the planning they do for the calendar-year workload agreement process.

Ineligibility for funding: No project or event will be funded if the request for funding is received by the Dean's Office after the fundable phase of research is begun, or in the case of events, if registration has been opened.

Process for Requesting Research Funding

1. The correct way to advance a request for research funding (including events support) is through the Department Chair to the Associate Dean for Faculty Support. It is preferable for the Department Chair to demonstrate a financial commitment from the department prior to forwarding the request to the Dean's Office.

Ineligibility for funding: No request for support will be considered for funding unless it is forwarded through the Chair.

2. Unsolicited requests for funding should **not** be sent directly to any of the following: COLFA Dean's Office staff; Downtown COLFA Dean's Office; Provost's Office; President's Office; Office of Vice President for Research; Office of the Vice Provost for Downtown; Office of Sponsored Projects Administration; Office of International Programs; Research Centers and Institutes; or departmental or dean's offices in other colleges. The offices mentioned do not accept unsolicited support requests and when they do distribute funds they require an endorsement from the dean of the requester's home college.

Ineligibility for funding: If a request for funding is received by the COLFA Dean's Office either simultaneously or after the request has been made to one of these other offices, it will no longer be eligible for consideration by the Dean's Office.

3. Requests for funding should be made to the faculty member's Chair by e-mail. The applicant should include:
 - a clear description of the activity to be supported, a timeline, and the overall budget.
 - brief explanation of the significance of the research or creative activity for the applicant's scholarship, the Department, College, and University. Benefits to students, if any, should also be highlighted.
 - other potential supporters.
4. Typical awards from the College are in the range of \$500 to \$2,000, although the College will consider larger amounts. It is helpful if **budgets for larger projects** include itemized fundables so that the obligations can be divided among multiple potential supporters. For larger projects, the Associate Dean will seek supplementary funding from other sources as deemed appropriate.

5. The College will consider **only one** request for funding from an individual faculty member each academic year. Applicants who receive funding will be notified by email by the Associate Dean for Faculty Support.

III) Assistance with Grant Proposals

- The COLFA Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies coordinates with the Research Service Center for the Liberal and Fine Arts, Business, and Honors (RSC-ABH) in helping faculty develop and run external grants and contracts. The RSC-ABH has a knowledgeable and dedicated staff providing assistance in opportunity identification, communication with funding agencies, preparation and submission of proposals, and post-award grant management.

Grant Proposal Procedure

- Before submitting a formal proposal for external funding, please make sure that you are following the policies and procedures outlined by the Office of Sponsored Project Administration (OSPA). To obtain additional information about the OSPA and RSC-ABH, please visit: <http://research.utsa.edu/osp/> . A summary of the proposal procedure follows:
 1. Notify the Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies and a senior staff member at the RSC-ABH about your intent to apply for a grant. The RSC-ABH is the everyday liaison between COLFA and the Office of Sponsored Programs Administration, and the first line of communication for grants and contracts.
 2. Work with the RSC-ABH staff to create a budget and narrative for the proposal.
 3. Work with the RSC-ABH staff to create new proposal within the CAYUSE424 System.
 4. Ensure that the chair of your department has been informed about your plan to submit a formal proposal, and that the chair has an established CAYUSE424 link. If your proposal entails course releases or departmental support, the chair must approve these commitments.
 5. If your project involves use of human subjects, please plan to complete the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) course as soon as possible. For additional information about the CITI program, please visit: <https://www.citiprogram.org/> .
 6. The Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies will be available to review and edit all sections of the proposal, if needed, before final submission.

IV) Support for Competitive Fellowships

- The COLFA Dean's Office encourages, authorizes, and provides financial support for faculty competitive fellowships such as those awarded by Fulbright, NEH, NEA, NSF, ACLS, Russell Sage, and various research centers at other universities and libraries. Participation in a fellowship award requires prior review and approval by the Dean's Office even if the host agency accepts applications directly from faculty or does not require approval from the home institution. Fellowship awards typically require residence elsewhere and do not cover the full salary of the applicant or replacement cost to UTSA. Therefore the university must budget to "top off" the award so that the awardee does not take a financial loss and maintains benefits, and must also budget for substitute instructors. The university will cover these contributions when the award is deemed in advance to be in the best interest of the institution. Evaluation of applications for UTSA support will include consideration of the applicant's research record and productivity during previous leaves.

Fellowship Procedure

1. Before applying, at least 30 days before the application deadline and minimally 6 months prior to the start date of the fellowship, discuss your intention to apply with your department chair. Ensure that your intention to apply and any subsequent award are recorded in the three-year schedule of work outlined in your Annual Workload Agreement.
2. Before applying, obtain a letter of endorsement from your department chair which a) explains how the award would be in the best interest of UTSA, b) approves the faculty member's absence, and c) requests university financial and clerical support for an award, and forward to the Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies.
3. Per HOP 2.10.II.B and 2.22 IX.B.1.e, approved leave of absence from UTSA for a fellowship may affect the length of the Promotion and Tenure (and by implication, the Third Year Review) and Comprehensive Period Evaluation probationary period. Anticipated recalculation of the faculty member's probationary period for P&T or CPE review should be acknowledged in the chair's endorsement memo.
4. The Associate Dean of Research and Graduate Studies will review and approve or disapprove requests for support. Approval constitutes a commitment to provide the balance of 100% salary funding for the awardee and replacement NTT funding for the department.
5. The Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies will be available to review and edit all sections of the proposal, if needed, before final submission.
6. Fellowship proposals are not run through the RSC-ABH, but RSC-ABH staff are available to advise on these proposals.