I. PURPOSE
To provide information and guidance regarding the use of sponsored project funds to reallocate a faculty member’s effort from teaching to the sponsored project activity, viz. course buyout.

II. SCOPE
Faculty submitting proposals for external support are expected to provide assurance that they will devote an adequate and appropriate effort on a particular project. When a faculty member’s anticipated effort on sponsored projects is precluded because of teaching load expectations, faculty may request funds from an external sponsor for course buyout purposes. Authority for approval of course buyouts lies with Department Chairs and College Deans.

This policy is limited to financial aspects of incorporating course buyouts into sponsored project budgets. This policy applies to tenure-track and tenured faculty with roles as Principal Investigator or Co-Principal Investigator on sponsored (externally funded) projects initially submitted through the Office of Research Administration and subsequently awarded to Villanova University through the Office of Research Administration. This policy applies regardless of whether the sponsor is a federal, state, local, corporate, non-profit, or foreign entity, and regardless of the primary purpose of the sponsored project.

III. DEFINITIONS
Course buyout – the use of external funds to reallocate a portion of a faculty member’s effort from teaching to sponsored project activity.

IV. POLICY STATEMENT
A. Budgeting for course buyouts in proposals for external support
The framework for course buyout budgeting is the University Policy on Teaching Load, Overload, and Out-of-Load Teaching (see Section VI below). Budgeting for course buyout is based on a faculty member’s 9-month salary being equivalent to 24 contact hours per year of teaching. Thus,
1. to reallocate 3 contact hours of teaching per year to sponsored project activity requires external sponsor funding equivalent to 3/24 (1/8) of a faculty member’s 9-month salary;
2. to reallocate 4 contact hours of teaching per year to sponsored project activity requires external sponsor funding equivalent to 4/24 (1/6) of a faculty member’s 9-month salary;
3. to reallocate 6 contact hours of teaching per year to sponsored project activity requires external sponsor funding equivalent to 6/24 (1/4) of a faculty member’s 9-month salary;
4. Budgets for external sponsor funding for course buyout must include the maximum fringe benefits and indirect costs allowed by the external sponsor.

B. Post-award distribution of funds designated for course buyout

Funds received from external sponsors designated to cover course buyout are to be distributed as follows:

1. First, if temporary faculty are to be hired to teach courses affected by the course buyout as indicated in the signed Internal Proposal Form, funds to support hiring of temporary faculty will be allocated to the relevant college or departmental temporary instructional budget.

2. Second, up to 50 per cent of the remainder of course buyout funds (after covering temporary faculty replacement costs) will be used to cover any University grant-matching costs for equipment, supplies, graduate or undergraduate research stipends, etc., that were pledged in the grant proposal as University contributions under the terms of the grant.

3. Third, any remaining course buyout funds will be returned to the appropriate College Dean.

V. PROCEDURE

A. Course buyout approvals prior to proposal submission

Signatures of Department Chairs and Deans on the Internal Proposal Form indicate that the course buyout plan has their approval. If temporary faculty will be needed to teach the courses affected by the course buyout, this need must be clearly detailed on the Internal Proposal Form.

B. Post-award budget reconfiguration to accommodate course buyouts

Reconfiguring budgets of awarded sponsored projects to provide course buyouts that were not a part of an initial submitted proposal is to be avoided. Faculty requests for such reconfiguration will require exceptionally strong justification, as such requests imply a change in scope and/or effort of the project. All requests to reconfigure budgets of awarded sponsored projects to provide course buyouts will be reviewed by the ORA, which will determine whether the request is allowable and/or whether the request must be submitted, by the ORA, to the sponsor.

VI. RELATED INFORMATION/FORMS

“The normal teaching load for faculty members who are productively engaged in scholarly research that regularly leads to publication is 18 credit hours per year, or the equivalent. Faculty members who are not thus engaged normally teach 24 credits per year, or the equivalent. For faculty members who are extraordinarily productive in research and publication, who carry unusual administrative or service duties, who receive grants providing for additional released time, or who, as new faculty members, receive reduced teaching loads as part of their initial appointments, these teaching duties may be reduced by their deans. Each Villanova college or school adopts its own approach to implementing this policy, and the deans may exercise discretion in this teaching load policy in order to support faculty recipients of grants or contracts. Any such teaching reductions constitute a form of University cost-enforcement...
sharing or matching for purposes of the grant or contract. For such purposes, a faculty member’s total work load is considered to be 24 credit hours, and released time in grant/contract budgets must be calculated on this basis” (University Policy on Teaching Load, Overload, and Out-of-Load Teaching).

VII. HISTORY

VIII. RESPONSIBLE UNIVERSITY DIVISION/DEPARTMENT
Office of the Provost

IX. RESPONSIBLE ADMINISTRATIVE OVERSIGHT
Administrative Oversight Office:
Office of Research Administration
Middleton Hall Rm 1st
800 Lancaster Avenue
Villanova, PA 19085

General Telephone Number: 610-519-4220