

## Guidelines: Teaching Releases to Support Research and Scholarship

The University of Toronto Scarborough Office of the Vice-Principal Academic & Dean (OVPD) supports faculty success in all aspects of their careers as scholars. All faculty on an appointment of 50% or greater are entitled to apply for research and study leaves that provide extended time to undertake research, scholarship, professional development, or pedagogical work. Outside of leaves, academic units assign faculty workload with a broad understanding of faculty responsibility, and normally those assignments allow faculty to pursue research, pedagogical and professional development, teaching, and service with a sense of success and balance. Sometimes, however, the balance of work needs to shift for faculty members. In such cases, mindful of departmental workload policies, OVPD may consider releasing a faculty member from a portion of their teaching responsibilities on a time-limited basis.

OVPD outlines one set of concerns when striking this balance: the criteria we will consider when approving and, in some cases, funding teaching releases associated with research and scholarship. These criteria are part of a tri-campus effort to clarify practices regarding research and study leaves and thus engage with (1) the 2007 Faculty of Arts & Sciences (FAS) Supplementary Administrative Guidelines to the Provostial Guidelines on Research and Study Leaves and (2) current University of Toronto guidelines on Research and Study Leave.

- As stated in the FAS and University of Toronto guidelines, OVPD will support teaching releases and leaves that allow faculty members to pursue prestigious fellowships, defined as “highly competitive and recognized as such [and with a] monetary value [that] approximates the salary of the faculty member, or at least the equivalent cost of a full-time replacement.”
- The funding to support salary and/or replacement costs for teaching release and for fully paid leaves associated with a prestigious fellowship must come directly from the funder to the University.
- Approved leaves associated with prestigious fellowships and approved by the Vice Provost, Faculty & Academic Life (VP-FAL) will be paid (with funds drawn from the fellowship as appropriate) and will count as credit toward a faculty member’s next sabbatical leave. Fully paid leaves associated with research fellowships not recognized as prestigious and outside the sabbatical cycle will normally be unpaid and will not count as credit toward the next sabbatical leave.
- The OVPD will also (1) approve a 0.5FCE/year teaching release for named Directors of successful proposals for Tri-Council Partnership Grant funding and (2) work with chairs to ensure that teaching is replaced in line with departmental curricular and budgetary needs.
- Requests for teaching release and leaves should be discussed with the head(s) of a faculty member’s unit, and requests should come to OVPD with the support of the unit head(s). That support does not guarantee OVPD approval or funding.
- When considering teaching release requests from pre-tenure and pre-continuing status faculty, OVPD will consider a department’s workload policy, the timing of the release or leave in the faculty members’ career review process, feedback from interim and probationary reviews, and the need for evidence of teaching effectiveness in the tenure or continuing status file.
- When deciding whether to fund teaching releases intended to support research and scholarship outside of prestigious fellowships and those associated with Partnership Grants, OVPD will consider the department’s capacity to fund the release on their own and the faculty member’s progress toward promotion to Professor and Professor, Teaching Stream.

In addition, OVPD will consider the following when reviewing requests for teaching releases.

- **Is a teaching release or leave the best means of supporting the faculty member's program of research, creative and professional activity, or pedagogical and professional development?** In some cases, administrative support, supplemental research or teaching funds, or student and trainee assistance may be more helpful or effective. This list is not meant to be exhaustive. OVPD welcomes conversations with faculty and unit heads about how best to support faculty success.
- **Does the teaching release or leave support research, creative and professional activity, or pedagogical and professional development that will provide opportunities for student research training and mentorship?** Faculty members may contribute to the teaching mission of the university even when not engaged in classroom teaching, and we encourage faculty to identify teaching, training, and mentorship opportunities for students in their research programs.
- **Will the faculty member maintain a reasonable teaching load, even with an approved teaching release?** Outside of sabbatical leaves, faculty members are expected to engage in classroom teaching. OVPD expects that in any given year, faculty members will not normally have less than 0.5FCE assigned teaching given teaching releases intended to support research, scholarship, and administrative and other assignments. We encourage faculty and chairs to approach teaching releases holistically, with an eye toward overall assigned teaching.

A request for a teaching release is not approved until the faculty member and unit head have secured the approval of the Vice-Principal Academic & Dean. Unpaid leaves require VP-FAL approval.