



WISCONSIN
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Teaching Buyout Policy
Department of Integrative Biology
approved 11/7/2023

Introduction

Faculty in the Department of Integrative Biology (iBio) may use funding from extramural grants to buy out their teaching obligations for limited periods. As described below, all buyout proposals must be approved by (1) the iBio Curriculum Committee and then (2) the iBio Executive Committee before they are sent to the College of Letters and Science (L&S) for a final decision. As a result, faculty proposing a buyout should follow the process described below to generate and submit a proposal to the iBio Executive Committee for review well in advance of the semester in which they seek teaching release. If the proposal is approved, it will be sent to L&S for a final decision. Please note that buyouts of all courses for longer than one year are not common and will need additional approval by L&S leadership.

Overview of process for faculty

Before submitting grant proposals that include buyouts:

Faculty who are interested in buying out their teaching should compose a statement providing a rationale for the buyout. This statement should describe the overall motivation for, and benefit of, the buyout. It should also include the desired number of courses that year that are part of the buyout. This statement should be sent to the Department Chair, Chair of the iBio Curriculum Committee, and iBio Academic Program Director. Submitting the rationale prior to submitting the relevant grant proposal will allow the iBio Curriculum Committee to assess how the timeline for the buyout might affect the faculty member's teaching, and in turn the departmental teaching mission.

As an additional layer of support, the iBio Research Administrator will review grant proposals for the presence of funds requested for faculty buyout. If found, the iBio Research Admin. will notify the iBio Curriculum Committee for approval. Although the final amount of a buyout will depend upon the type of course(s) the faculty member would otherwise be teaching, a general guideline is that a full 1 academic year buyout will require 80% of the faculty member's base salary (the remaining 20% of salary is not required because it is assumed that the faculty member will still be performing service duties). The normal teaching load in the Department of Integrative Biology is 2 courses during the academic year, 1 in one semester and 1 in the other. Faculty are expected to teach in both graduate and undergraduate programs, in addition to direct independent studies. If that faculty member wanted to buy out their entire year of teaching (both semesters), 80% of their base salary is an amount to consider as a starting place. If the faculty member wanted to buy out a single semester, then 40% of their base salary is a starting place to discuss the ultimate buyout cost. If a situation should arise in which different buyout rates may be optimal (or mandated by granting agencies), faculty requesting the buyout should provide a rationale to obtain an exception for the buyout rate. This request for a rate exception will ultimately be sent to L&S leadership for consideration.

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Once the faculty member and iBio Curriculum Committee have worked together to finalize the details of the rationale, the buyout proposal must be reviewed and approved by the iBio Executive Committee prior to being sent to L&S leadership. Each proposal must contain standardized language approved by the department's Executive Committee regarding (1) the number of courses a faculty member can buy out of each year; and (2) the percentage of faculty that can buy out of courses each year (iBio policy is that no more than 10% of faculty can buy out in a given year). If a faculty member requesting buyout believes that their request will exceed the department's desired percentage of faculty that can buyout each year, the faculty member should include a rationale for this exception. This is important because any deviation from the 10% departmental policy for a given year will need to be approved by L&S leadership.

After a grant proposal is funded:

If a grant proposal requesting buyout is funded, the faculty member should contact the Chair of the iBio Curriculum Committee and the Academic Program Director immediately so the plan for the buyout can be discussed and finalized as far ahead as possible.

Summary of Process

1. Faculty interested in buyout inform the iBio Curriculum Committee of their intent in writing prior to submitting their grant proposal (3-6 months in advance).
2. The iBio Research Administrator reviews the proposal and confirms/informs the iBio Curriculum Committee that approval of buyout is needed.
3. The iBio Curriculum Committee reviews and approves the buyout proposal.
4. The iBio Executive Committee reviews and approves the buyout proposal. Proposal is sent to L&S leadership for final approval.
5. If the grant proposal is funded, the faculty member should contact the Chair of the iBio Curriculum Committee and the Academic Program Director immediately so that the plan for the buyout can be discussed and finalized.