Policy on Research Extended Appointments

No. 6200

Policy Effective Date:
4/1/1996

Last Revision Date:
5/6/2024

Policy Owner:
Julie Ross

Policy Author: *(Contact Person)*
Ron Fricker

Affected Parties:
Faculty

1.0 Purpose
2.0 Policy
3.0 Procedures
4.0 Definitions
5.0 References
6.0 Approval and Revisions

1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide faculty members on academic-year appointments the opportunity to extend their base 9-month contract to a 10-, 11-, or 12-month contract reflecting their sponsored research responsibilities. The research-extended appointment recognizes continuing obligations for supervision of graduate student research and periods of faculty research that extend beyond the academic year. Salary and fringe benefits associated with the faculty member's research work are funded by sponsored grants or contracts.

2.0 Policy

A full-time faculty member on an academic year appointment may extend the 9-month appointment to a 10-, 11-, or 12-month appointment provided the following conditions are met:

1. The faculty member must have assurance of sufficient funding from sponsored grants or contracts to support the cost of salary plus full fringe benefits for the equivalent of one, two, or three months of the proposed appointment. With approval by the head or chair, departmental funds, usually overhead, designated for the faculty member's use may be committed as back up if pending grants are not yet secured. Educational and general funds (such as departmental salary budget, E&G start up funds, or internal grants) may not be used to support a request for a research extended appointment.
2. The contract period and formula for calculating salaries for 10-, 11-, and 12-month appointments are below:

Contract length	Contract Period	Conversion Factor
9 months (Base AY appt)	August 10 - May 9	Base AY salary
10 months	August 10 – June 9	Base AY salary X 1.11111 (10/9ths)
11 months	August 10 – July 9	Base AY salary X 1.22222 (11/9ths)
12 months	August 10 – August 9	Base AY salary X 1.33333 (12/9ths)

   Contractual dates above are necessary in order to create a continuous extended contract. However, actual summer work dates for those on 10- or 11-month appointments may vary from the payroll dates. Summer effort will be certified across the entire three-month summer period, not just the payroll dates in the table above.

3. The research extended appointments are typically approved for one or two years at a time, depending on length of the sponsored grant or contract. They may be renewed without limit by submitting a request for extension with documentation of funding to the department head.

The appointment length may also be changed as funding increases or decreases. Reconversion to a 9-month appointment should be effective August 10 to assure appropriate escrowing for the subsequent summer.

4. In the event of a shortfall, the faculty member may use designated funds approved by the head or chair (usually overhead) to cover the salary obligations of the extended appointment in the current year. Fringe benefit costs will follow the salary distribution. Failure to fully fund the research extended appointment from *sponsored* grants and contracts will mean that the faculty member must reconvert to an academic year (9-month) appointment August 10th or reduce the number of months for the appointment to match documented available sponsored funding.

   It is important to note that faculty members who do not have the prospect for sufficient sponsored funding (or approved back up sources) to support the additional months of salaried appointment may be required to terminate their extended appointment May 9 (end of the academic year), or the date when funding has been exhausted, and go on leave without pay until the beginning of the subsequent academic year. Mid-year changes from research extended appointments back to academic year because of lack of sponsored funding will also cause dramatic changes in take-home pay. It will be important to consult with Human Resources to determine the pay-related impact of such changes, should they become necessary at a date other than August 10.

   The department and the university have no obligation to provide funding from E&G (educational and general) or any other source to continue a research extended appointment in the absence of adequate *sponsored* grant or contract funding. Distribution of salary costs among funding sources must ensure that no more salary is taken from the 208/229 source than the pre-conversion AY salary.

5. The conversion process must be requested and approved at least two weeks prior to the effective date. Retroactive conversions will not be approved. Appointments can be extended only by increments of a full month. The effective date should be the start of a regular payroll period – either the 10th or 25th of the month. Any excess escrowed pay for the academic year will be paid out to the faculty member at the time of change to the new appointment.

6. The requirement to earn additional sponsored funds in support of the extended research appointment must be managed by charging a portion of the salary during all or part of the entire appointment period to the sponsored grant or contract. Faculty members should have a portion of their summer salary charged to university funds to reflect on-going university responsibilities over the summer, such as working with graduate students, attending or presenting at professional conferences, preparing courses or new sponsored proposals, or personal leave. The portion charged to institutional funds should accurately reflect the faculty member's non-project-related responsibilities. Salary charges to the sponsored project during part or all of the prior academic year will allow the appropriate mixture of institutional and sponsored funding during the summer. Salary charges should match subsequent certification of effort in accordance with Policy 3105: Effort Certification. Each fall, salary charges for the entire prior year (August 10 to August 9) are audited to ensure that the research extended appointment is funded and charged appropriately.

7. Faculty members on 12-month appointments cannot receive additional compensation for summer school teaching or other duties considered part of their usual job responsibilities. However, they do remain eligible for additional compensation for participation in continuing education programs in accordance with policies in the Faculty Handbook. Those on 10- or 11-month research extended contracts may earn additional income from other activities as wages. However, the total of all summer earnings, including the research extended contract and any wage earnings, may not exceed 33 1/3% of their base AY appointment for the preceding academic year

8. Faculty members on research extended appointments earn and accrue annual leave proportional to their appointments and designated holidays as described in the Faculty Handbook. Faculty members are subject to policies related to the use and reporting of annual leave and are expected to perform duties during academic breaks unless on approved annual leave. New research extended appointments initiated after January 10 will receive 5 days of annual leave at the time of conversion to assure minimal leave time during the first summer of appointment.

   Faculty members on research extended appointments are advised to use annual leave during the appointment period. Unused annual leave will *not* be compensated at the time of reconversion or separation.

9. Sick leave and other benefits remain unchanged.

10. Merit adjustments are made on the salary for the research extended appointment, proportionally increasing the obligation to the sponsored account. For those who have eminent scholar supplements prior to converting to a research extended appointment, the base salary including the eminent scholar supplement may be multiplied by the appropriate factor. However, the eminent scholar supplement generally cannot be increased to accommodate the change in appointment, putting a larger burden on the sponsored funding.

3.0 Procedures

Faculty members requesting a research extended appointment should complete the request form available on the Provost's web site: www.provost.vt.edu. Documentation of available funding must be provided. Research extended appointments must be renewed annually with verification of sponsored funding by the department head to support the continuation. (The continuation request form is also on the same website.) In addition to the form, the department should submit a P3A indicating the research extended appointment in the departmental note and documenting the percentage used and length of appointment (10, 11, or 12 months) in order to initiate the change in appointment period. Requests for research extended appointments require approval by the department head, dean, and provost.

Reconversion to a 9-month appointment, or a change in the length of the research extended appointment, is accomplished by P3A. To calculate the AY salary, divide the extended appointment salary by the same factor as originally used.

4.0 Definitions

5.0 References

Policy 3105, Effort Certification
https://policies.vt.edu/assets/3105.pdf

Faculty Leave Policies
https://www.hr.vt.edu/benefits/leave/employee-leave-plans/faculty.html

6.0 Approval and Revisions

Recommended by the Commission on Research: February 28, 1996
Approved by University Council: April 1, 1996
Approved by the President: April 1, 1996
Approved by the Board of Visitors: April 22, 1996

- Revision 1
  Revised July 26, 1999. Changed dates for the May and August effective dates from the 16th of the month to the 10th.

- Revision 2
  Revised April 23, 2002 – Possible CY position start date corrected from July 1 to June 25; CY salary conversion rates corrected from "within the range of 1.222 to 1.333" to "1.222 or 1.333" corresponding to the two- or three-month time period.

- Revision 3
  Complete revision of text to allow 10- and 11-month appointments as well as 12-month appointments. Change of policy title from "CY Research Conversions" to "Research Extended Appointments." Elimination of requirement to earn and report annual leave.

Approved by the Commission on Research:	September 14, 2005
Endorsed by the Commission on Faculty Affairs:	September 16, 2005
First Reading, University Council:	October 10, 2005
Approval by University Council:	October 24, 2005
Approved by the Board of Visitors:	November 7, 2005

- Revision 4
  - Revised September 2009: Changes made to bring policy into compliance with federal grant and contract compliance requirements concerning summer salary for AY faculty members. Clarification of language to emphasize need to charge salary in relation to effort across the entire appointment period.
  - Changes recommended by the Task Force on Federal Contract Compliance.

Reviewed by the Commission on Research	September 30, 2009
Approved by the Vice President for Research	October 12, 2009
Approved by the Board of Visitors	November 9, 2009

- Revision 5
  Revised Spring 2010 to reinstate annual leave for research extended appointments, to allow approved designated funds (usually overhead) to be used as a backup salary source in case of shortfall, and to create greater flexibility in initiation dates.

Approved by the Commission on Faculty Affairs	April 9, 2010
Approved by the Commission on Research	April 14, 2010
Approved by University Council	May 3, 2010
Approved by the Board of Visitors	June 7, 2010

- Revision 6
  Clarifying edits to section 2.0, #7 and #8 to correlate with the Faculty Handbook.
  Approved May 6, 2024, by Executive Vice President and Provost Cyril Clarke.