Menlo College Faculty Senate Personnel Committee

Release Time Policy

(approved by Senate 5/8/2008)

1. Reduction in teaching load from 12 to 9 credits, i.e. release time from a course, is another way to encourage research, scholarly and creative work within the faculty. While such release time is clearly not as extensive as a sabbatical leave, it may be sufficient to allow a faculty member to start a project, test a promising idea, obtain preliminary results prior to seeking external support, or complete a submission which would otherwise be impossible. It is recommended that release time be available to faculty via either of two possible routes.

a. COMPLETED COURSE RELEASE: Any faculty member who gets a paper or creative work accepted in a refereed forum will earn one course release time in the following academic year. Only full acceptances qualify, not "revise and resubmit" notices. No more than two such course releases will be granted per faculty member per academic year.

b. COMPETITIVE COURSE RELEASE: Any faculty member may apply for one course release time per academic year. The concept here is a "mini-sabbatical" for one term to launch or significantly advance research, scholarly and creative activities.

i. The proposed project must address at least one of the following criteria:

   1. Demonstrates, as directly as possible, the link between the research, scholarly, or creative activity and the development of student learning and courses; or

   2. Supports the strategic mission and goals of the College.

ii. The proposed projects will also be reviewed on the basis of the following criteria:

   1. Quality of the project and the proposal;
2. Project's contribution to the field; and/or

3. How the work has/will be used (e.g., publication, artistic exhibition, curricular materials, other uses).

   iii. No more than four (4) such course releases will be granted per semester (the equivalent of one full-time equivalent faculty).

2. During the semester following a course release, a faculty member must submit evidence to the Academic Dean demonstrating how the criteria in item 1.b.11. was achieved. Evidence may include but is not limited to:

   a. Preliminary results.


   c. Course Materials.

   d. Certification or other evidence of completed coursework.

3. The application process for such course releases will be the same as for sabbatical leaves. However, the statement of the purpose for the release time and the plans for its use need not be as extensive as for a sabbatical. In selecting between applications, priority should be given to proposals which clearly support the scholarly and professional development of the faculty member.

4. Release time may also be granted to faculty members by the administration for specific academically related tasks. For example, the President of the Senate is granted one course release per semester during their presidency. Given Menlo College's mission, such release time will be granted with due consideration to the loss of full-time instruction and the academic benefits gained.

5. Applications for release time will be processed by the Academic Dean, in consultation with the Personnel Committee. The Academic Dean will report all release time to the Personnel Committee at least once per year.