Faculty Supplemental Compensation Policy

Occasionally, a faculty member may be asked to assume extra duties for supplemental compensation. Under no circumstances will such duties be required, nor may they be allowed if they would interfere with the faculty member’s regular duties. Supplemental compensation may not exceed 20% of the base salary per fiscal year.

The complete OSU policy on Faculty Supplemental Compensation can be found at https://oaa.osu.edu/assets/files/documents/facultycompensation.pdf.

Supplemental compensation is for temporary work clearly beyond the faculty member’s normal assignments, in an amount appropriate to the allocation of time necessary to complete the extra assignment. The extra assignment should be nonrecurring and clearly limited in time and scope. Sometimes overloads are requested by Program Coordinators and the Associate Dean. Other times, such as summer, faculty voluntarily request overloads.

In 2009, the Ohio State Mansfield Budget & Compensation Committee (BCC) recommended placing a cap on voluntary course overload pay (especially but not exclusively regarding summer teaching). For 2009 and 2010, the committee recommended a cap of $6,000.00 on such course overload pay (reduced to 80% for courses that had low enrollments); as part of that recommendation, the BCC decided to revisit the recommendation in the winter of 2011. Below is their recommendation to the Executive Committee, which has been policy since.

Recommendation:

• The goal of the cap was to help alleviate budgetary concerns by reducing costs in a part of the budget that is “fat” rather than “meat and bone,” to use a common metaphor: course overload pay is not a guarantee and is not part of regular compensation but is a bonus, as it were—an extra. For the good of the campus, it is better to reduce such extras than more vital parts of the budget. In the summer of 2010, the $6,000.00 cap saved $27,846.60; in the summer of 2009, it saved $21,819.22. It would be extremely difficult to find another way of saving this much money while having a smaller negative impact on faculty, staff, and students.

• The budget situation has not improved; in fact, it has worsened. This is not a time to increase costs, especially in non-vital parts of the budget such as course overload pay. Regarding the 21%-cut proposal, it is important to remember that the goal of the $6,000.00 cap was not to save a certain percentage but to save as much as reasonably possible in order to avoid having to make other, more destructive, cuts. As the above savings figures for summer 2010 and summer 2009 show, a reduction of 21% will not necessarily result in as much savings as the $6,000.00 cap.

• The $6,000.00 cap is not arbitrary; it is based on comparisons with other OSU campuses and departments. Moreover, the $6,000.00 cap is generous: some other OSU
campuses and departments have instituted a lower course overload pay cap in response to recent budget difficulties. Indeed, the committee expects that, if our budget situation worsens, we may well need to revisit the cap and consider lowering it.

• We recognize that a flat cap constitutes a greater pay reduction for faculty whose base salary is higher; two such faculty members are members of the current four-person Budget & Compensation Committee making this recommendation. Yet we deem this inequity to be minor considering that, again, course overload pay is an “extra”—it is not guaranteed and is not part of one’s regular compensation. Additionally, this minor inequity is of the same kind as other unavoidable inequities in an institution where so many people perform such a great variety of tasks (just as not all overload courses have exactly the same number of credit hours or exactly the same enrollment, and some have labs, some are writing intensive and so require extra grading time, etc.). For the good of a campus facing potentially dire budget cuts, the current policy asks those members of the campus who earn most, and who voluntarily choose to teach extra classes, to cut back a little more on their extra pay in order to protect what’s most vital to the life of the campus. This does not seem unreasonable. Indeed, no other campuses or departments that we know of use a percentage reduction, while many use a flat cap for overload course pay.

• An argument was put forward that the $6,000.00 cap might encourage junior faculty to teach overloads and so should be changed, but this argument is unpersuasive. It is against university policy for junior faculty to be teaching course overloads except in what should be very rare circumstances. If that policy is being ignored by some, then the solution is simply to enforce that existing policy.

This document is kept current by the Associate Dean.
Revised to include the 2011 BCC policy on 2/23/2021.