

## Questions and Answers

### UMBC Sponsored Research Appointments

***Q: I currently hold an appointment as an Exceptional Sponsored Research Fellow. Is that Program going to continue?***

No. There will be no new appointments or reappointments under the Exceptional Sponsored Research Fellows Program. You will complete your current appointment, and you will continue to certify annually that you meet the criteria for that program. When your Exceptional Sponsored Research Fellow appointment expires, you may continue your 12-month appointment by applying for a Sponsored Research Appointment.

***Q: What are the benefits of holding a Sponsored Research Appointment?***

Faculty members who hold 12-month appointments accrue 15 days of sick leave and 22<sup>1</sup> days of annual leave per year. They may also take three days of personal leave per year. Contributions to retirement are based on the entire 12-month salary. In contrast, faculty members who have academic-year appointments accrue 12 days of sick leave per year and earn no annual leave or personal leave. If they receive additional compensation during the summer, no contributions to retirement are made on summer salary.

***Q: How much external funding do I need to qualify for a Sponsored Research Appointment?***

To qualify for a Sponsored Research Appointment you must be able to supplement your current academic year base salary by at least 20%. The table below shows the proportional share of total 12-month salary and fringe benefits for different percentage salary supplements:

<i>% Salary Supplement</i>	20.0%	22.2%	25.0%	26.3%	30.0%	33.3%
<i>% Share of Total Salary and Fringe</i>	16.7%	18.2%	20.0%	20.8%	23.1%	25.0%

Because salaries are determined after the application for a Sponsored Research Appointment is filed, the actual expenditures on salary and fringe benefits will depend on the base salary for the following academic year, which will reflect COLA, merit, and any other salary adjustments.

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<sup>1</sup>After 20 years of service, 12-month faculty members earn 25 of annual leave days per year.

**Q: *Are there other costs, in addition to salary, that my grant or contract must pay?***

Yes. Your grant or contract will be charged a proportional share of all fringe benefits. These include FICA/Medicare, all health benefits, retirement contributions, and other benefits such as tuition. Note that the State pays the full cost of health benefits for faculty with academic year appointments, but faculty with 12-month appointments pay a proportional share of health benefits from their grants/contracts. The grant must also pay indirect costs on its share of salary and fringe benefits.

**Q: *How will my 12-month salary be determined?***

After salaries are set for the upcoming academic year, you will have a new academic year base salary, and the appropriate proportional share of your new 12-month salary will be borne by your grant/contract.

*Example:* Prof. Starr has a current academic year base salary of \$75,000. She has enough money in her grant to cover 20% of her current salary (\$15,000) and so she qualifies for a Sponsored Research Appointment. Prof. Starr's academic year base salary for the following year then increases to \$76,500. Her grant would be responsible for a supplement equal to 20% of the new salary, or \$15,300 (plus fringe benefits), bringing her 12-month salary to \$91,800. The grant's proportional share of total salary (and benefits) is 16.7% ( $\$15,300/\$91,800$ ).

**Q: *What if I don't have enough money to pay the grant's share of my salary increase?***

You can qualify for the Sponsored Research Appointment based on 20% of your current salary, and you will be responsible for that dollar amount of salary (plus fringe benefits and indirect costs). That amount, plus your new academic year base salary, will determine your total 12-month salary. The resulting proportional share will therefore be less than shown in the table above.

*Example:* If Prof. Starr can only afford to augment her salary by \$15,000 (plus fringe benefits and indirect costs), her 12-month salary will be \$91,500. The grant's proportional share will therefore be ( $\$15,000/\$91,500$ ) or 16.4%.

**Q: *How do I document that I have sufficient funding for a Sponsored Research Appointment?***

You must include official notice of grants, contracts, or other extramural funds awarded with your Sponsored Research Appointment application. These notices are usually in the form of an official letter from the sponsor or a formal *Notice of Grant Award*. It is not sufficient to have a high probability of receiving the award.

***Q: Do I need permission from my sponsor to qualify for a Sponsored Research Appointment?***

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are in compliance with all rules and regulations imposed by your sponsor. Questions on such matters should be directed to the appropriate agency representative. No formal permission from the sponsor is required for the Sponsored Research Appointment Application.

***Q: Can my 12-month appointment run from May 23 to May 22, rather than from July 1 to June 30?***

No. All 12-month faculty appointments under this program will be fiscal-year appointments beginning July 1 and continuing through June 30 of the following calendar year.

***Q: I received a grant that begins August 1, 2002. Can I qualify for a Sponsored Research Appointment for fiscal year 2003?***

You must have funding available to cover the entire fiscal year, which begins on July 1, 2002. For some awards, the University is permitted to engage in pre-award activity 90 days before the official start date of the grant. If your sponsor allows pre-award activity, you may qualify for the Sponsored Research Appointment. If you do not qualify for the appointment, you may still draw summer salary from the grant for the period August 1- August 22, 2002.

***Q: My three-year grant began in March 2002. If I begin a Sponsored Research Appointment on July 1, can I draw summer salary for the first part of the summer?***

Yes. From May 23, 2002 to June 30, 2002, you can draw summer salary in the same manner as any other faculty member on an academic year appointment. No retirement benefits will be paid on this salary.

***Q: My three-year grant ends in March 2005. If I don't have any other external funding, what happens to my Sponsored Research Appointment?***

You will not be able to qualify for a Sponsored Research Appointment for fiscal year 2005, so your appointment will end on June 30, 2004. You will be able to draw summer salary for the period July 1 to August 22, 2004, but no retirement benefits will be paid on this salary.

***Q: My grant ends in March 2003, but I'll have enough money in my budget to pay at least 20% of my salary for fiscal year 2003. Can I qualify for a Sponsored Research Appointment?***

If you obtain a no-cost extension on the grant, so that it is active throughout fiscal year 2003, you can qualify for a Sponsored Research Appointment. Most agencies permit such no-cost extensions, and for some sponsors the University can simply inform the agency. Confer with your business manager or the Office of Sponsored Programs Administration for more information.

***Q: What happens if I begin a Sponsored Research Appointment with less than a 33.3% increment and then receive additional funding? Can I increase my supplement?***

Yes. Under the *Policy on Additional Compensation* the maximum supplement to a faculty member's academic year base salary is 33.3%. The increased level of research effort is consistent with an adjustment in the salary supplement, up to the 33.3% maximum.

***Q: Do I have to apply for a Sponsored Research Appointment each year?***

Once you have a Sponsored Research Appointment, you must certify and document annually that you have sufficient funding to continue your appointment for another fiscal year. The Certification of Continuing Eligibility form is similar to an application except that it does not need to be routed through the Department Chair and the Dean.

***Q: What happens if I don't use all of my annual leave each year?***

The *UMBC Implementation Procedures for the Policy Enabling Twelve-Month Faculty to Accumulate Annual Leave* can be found in the *Faculty Handbook*. Every effort should be made to use annual leave each year. Only in exceptional circumstances will carryover be permitted, and both the timing and details of the request must comply with the implementation procedures, which include a detailed plan for the use of the leave.

***Q: What happens if I have accrued annual leave when my Sponsored Research Appointment expires?***

Each day of annual leave is proportionately shared by all funding sources. At the expiration of a Sponsored Research Appointment, the State-supported share of unused leave will be forfeited. There will be no State-supported payout for unused annual leave when Sponsored Research Appointments expire. If the sponsor allows payout for unused annual leave, payout for the sponsor's share of unused annual leave will be permitted.

***Q: Can I continue to do consulting if I have a Sponsored Research Appointment?***

Under the Board of Regents' *Policy on Professional Commitment of Faculty*, consulting by full-time faculty members is permitted "only when it is assured that all responsibilities associated with the individual's position are satisfied and will continue to be met." The policy applies regardless of whether the faculty member holds an academic-year appointment or a 12-month appointment.

***Q: Can I earn overload compensation on a Sponsored Research Appointment?***

Under the *Policy on Additional Compensation*, you can request a waiver to receive additional, overload compensation for additional activities performed, above and beyond those for which compensation is already being received. Waivers are granted at the discretion of the Provost, and the decision is based on several factors listed in the policy.

***Q: What happens if I take a sabbatical leave?***

Faculty members with 12-month appointments who are eligible for sabbatical leave may request leave at full pay for six months (July 1 to December 31, or January 1 to June 30) or at half pay for twelve months under the existing *UMBC Policy on Sabbatical Leave for Faculty*.

***Q: Can I negotiate a lower overhead rate if I have a Sponsored Research Appointment?***

No. Under the *Policy on Exception to Federal Overhead Rates*, a written waiver must be obtained prior to submission of the research proposal, and a strong rationale for the reduction must be provided. (See <http://www.umbc.edu/ospa/pages/policies/policies.htm>.) Such a reduction would not be approved if its sole purpose were to facilitate the faculty member's eligibility for a Sponsored Research Appointment.

***Q: What happens if I want to use my grant funds to pay for course buy-out?***

Regardless of whether a faculty member holds an academic-year or 12-month appointment, grant funds may, with the approval of the department chair, be used to fund an increase in research effort during the academic year. For faculty members with Sponsored Research Appointments, this would simply result in a greater percentage share of total salary (plus fringe benefits and indirect costs) being funded by the grant or contract.

***Q: How do I fill out my Effort Report if I have a Sponsored Research Appointment?***

Your effort report should always represent the actual percentage of effort you spend on a project during the period covered by the report.

***Q: What happens if I lose my funding and can no longer qualify for a Sponsored Research Appointment?***

Your Sponsored Research Appointment will expire on June 30 and you will return to a 9-month academic-year appointment. You should confer with your departmental payroll preparer to ensure that appropriate deductions are taken for health benefits during the transition period.