



TO: Academic Deans, Directors, Department Heads
FROM: David M. Dooley
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Thomas McCoy 
Vice President for Research, Creativity and Technology

Transfer

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RE: BEST Program

The BEST (*Buy-out for Enhancing Scholarship and Teaching*) Program was initiated in 2002, with the goal to enhance scholarship and creative activities across campus, including the scholarship of teaching and learning. Due to the positive response in previous years, we plan to continue the BEST program in AY08/09. We will consider proposals for either fall or spring semester. The enclosure provides more detailed information on the program and how to apply. Please disseminate this information to your faculty, as we anticipate continued interest in this program.

Enclosure

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**Buy-out for Enhancing Scholarship and Teaching (The BEST Program)
(01-30-08)**

In 2002, the Provost and the Vice President for Research initiated a new program to assist tenured or tenurable faculty who want to enhance their scholarship. We recognized that teaching or other primary responsibility commitments for some faculty may occasionally provide a barrier to pursuing research and creative activities, and as a result the BEST Program was created. For AY08-09, faculty will be able to request a reduction in their teaching load or other primary responsibilities for either spring or fall semester. The faculty member making the request for a buy-out will be expected to engage in activities that will enhance their scholarship. Examples of activities include, but are not limited to the following:

- ◆ Preparation and submission of a grant proposal in response to a request for proposals from federal, state or private entities.
- ◆ Completion and submission of a research paper to a peer-reviewed journal, or completion of a creative work.
- ◆ Revision of a manuscript accepted for publication in a peer-reviewed journal, and submission of the revision.
- ◆ Completion of a book.
- ◆ Research into teaching, assessment, and/or pedagogy

The following process will be utilized for AY08-09:

1. A faculty member submits a request for a buy-out to her/his Dean and Department Head by deadlines established by the department and the college. In the request she/he will have to describe the activity they propose to engage in and indicate if the activity is for spring or fall semester. The Head will provide an assessment of each request from the department to the Dean.
2. Each Dean will review the requests from her/his college and send a prioritized list, including the proposed activities and requested dollar amount, to the Provost by April 4, 2008. If the Dean does not support the request she/he is to notify the faculty member that her/his request is not being submitted to the Provost and the Vice President for Research. For buy-outs of responsibilities other than instruction, the Dean shall provide a detailed rationale for the need to reduce the effort in those areas, as well as appropriate justification for the funds requested.
3. The Provost and the Vice President for Research will review the proposals and select faculty to be supported. Faculty will be notified of the decision on or before May 2, 2008.
4. Faculty who are successful in securing a buy-out will be expected to submit a statement of accomplishments to their Dean by February 1, 2009 for fall semester 2008 awards and July 1, 2009 for spring semester 2009 awards. The Dean will evaluate the statement and notify the Provost and the Vice President for Research of what was accomplished and whether the accomplishment was acceptable performance.

Regarding the BEST program, it is important to note the following:

- ◆ This program will NOT replace the Scholarship and Creativity Awards Program.
- ◆ Funds from this program can only be used for the actual buy-out costs. Whatever the buy-out rate is for a given college is the level of support that will be given to that college's Dean to reduce the teaching load or primary responsibility for the selected faculty member(s).