

December 1, 2005.

To: Deans and Directors

From: Jeffery Frumkin
Assistant Provost, and
Sr. Director, Academic HR

Re: Vacation Accrual for Non-Instructional Staff who Teach

It has come to our attention that academic units face an unintended barrier to recruiting employees who hold non-instructional University appointments (usually in research track and professional appointments) for teaching duties. These barriers arise due to the differences in existing policies on vacation accrual, extended sick leave and eligibility for long term disability for non-instructional appointments that are in an accrual system and instructional appointments that are not. This memorandum details a new University policy intended to remove the unintended consequences of our existing standard practices concerning reductions in effort for appointments that are in a vacation accrual system, eligibility for extended sick leave (SPG 201.11) and benefits under Long Term Disability and Group Life insurance.

Salary replacement benefits from the Long Term Disability Plan (LTD) are based on all salary sources. Eligibility for the LTD plan is determined by appointment status. In the case of split appointments, at least one of the appointments must be LTD eligible. For example, a research track or professional staff member with a 50% regular appointment and a 50% adjunct lecturer appointment would be eligible for participation in the LTD plan. Should this individual become disabled and approved for the LTD plan, the cash benefit would be based on both salary sources. In this example, if the person was appointed with a 40% regular appointment and a 60% adjunct lecturer appointment, they would not be eligible to participate in the LTD plan as neither appointment meets the eligibility criteria.

The same situation would occur with life insurance as the individual would need to have at least a 50% regular appointment to be eligible for participation in the life insurance plan. Also, the provisions of SPG 201.11 and 11-1 will also be treated in this fashion.

Under SPG 201.64-1: Vacation (Instructional Staff), both research track and professional staff accrue two days of vacation per month if appointed at 100%, pro-rated when appointment effort is less than 100%. The existing policy does not differentiate between an outright reduction in effort and the reduction of effort on the non-instructional title appointment that allows effort on an additional appointment in an instructional title. Therefore, employees who are tapped to serve in an important instructional role are penalized for doing so.

Earlier this year, then-Provost Paul N. Courant asked me to recommend a new University policy that would allow certain research track faculty and professional staff who hold additional appointments as instructional faculty to maintain their vacation accruals during the period of the additional instructional appointment.

A working group from the Provost's Office, OVPR, Payroll and HRRIS reviewed a number of options. We recommended that any forgone vacation accrual due to shift of effort to an instructional title appointment be restored to the employee at the end of the semester. It is important to note here that this process is limited to those research track faculty and non-instructional staff who do not have an on-going joint appointment as an instructional faculty member. Rather, this process of adjusting the vacation accrual at the end of each term is limited to those individuals whose primary employment relationship with the University is in a non-instructional appointment and who have accepted a time-limited joint instructional appointment.

We also recognized that the temporary reduction in the non-instructional appointment effort could trigger an unintended vacation pay out for individuals with a high vacation accrual which also would be disadvantageous. Therefore, the Payroll Office has implemented procedures so these pay outs do not occur and the vacation balance is not impacted by the time-limited instructional appointment, when timely notification of the shift in appointment effort has been sent to them.

These recommendations were based on the principle that acceptance of an instructional assignment should not cause individuals to suffer a diminishment of their benefits. The recommendations also rest upon the simplest of many possible administrative processes.

The new administrative process should be implemented beginning with the winter 2006 term. A template is attached to assist you with the process. It is quite important for the instructional department to coordinate with the unit where the non-instructional appointment resides. The shift in effort needs to be agreed to by the individual, his or her appointing unit for the non-instructional position, as well as the instructional unit making the additional appointment. The memoranda to the Payroll Office that stop a potential payout and that restore forgone vacation accrual must be sent by the unit where the non-instructional appointment resides.

Please inform the appropriate individuals in your School or College of this change. If there are any questions please contact Academic Human Resources at 763-8938.

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