



EAST TENNESSEE STATE
UNIVERSITY

Faculty Non-Instructional Assignment Policy

Policy Name: Faculty Non-Instructional Assignment

Policy Purpose

This policy specifies provisions under what circumstances the Provost may approve a non-instructional assignment (NIA).

Applicability

This policy is applicable to ETSU full-time tenured faculty.

Responsible Official, Office, and Interpretation

The Provost is responsible for the review and revision of this policy. For questions about this policy, please contact the Office of the Provost. The Provost, in conjunction with the Office of University Counsel, has the final authority to interpret this policy.

Defined Terms

A defined term has a specific meaning within the context of this policy.

Eligible Faculty Member

A full-time tenured faculty member.

External Sources

Salary support from non-university resources for the faculty member's time and effort on a sponsored activity.

Institutional Base Salary

The total salary to be paid to a faculty member.

Internal Sources

Salary support from university resources for the faculty member's time and effort.

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Policy

East Tennessee State University encourages Eligible Faculty Members to apply for non-instructional assignments (NIA) for the purpose of professional growth or development. The purposes of NIAs include enhancing scholarship and the university's academic excellence, contributing to the professional growth and renewal of faculty, strengthening the curriculum, and improving teaching in ways that may not be accomplished under the constraints of regular workload assignments. Professional growth or development activities include, but are not limited to, international education, research, writing, creative endeavors, or other professional experience. These activities enhance the scholarship and academic excellence of the university and hold promise to enhance the Eligible Faculty Member's professional skills and standing. Approval of NIAs should reflect ETSU's mission, goals, and needs. Published materials, exhibits, or performances produced with university funding or support must include an acknowledgment of East Tennessee State University. Faculty whose application for NIA is not approved may submit a proposal in subsequent semesters. The number of NIAs awarded will be proportional to the number of faculty in each college. NIAs are subject to funding availability from Internal Sources and/or External Sources.

1. Eligibility.

To be eligible for NIA, at the time of application, an applicant must:

- 1.1. Be a full-time tenured faculty member at the rank of assistant professor, associate professor, or professor;
- 1.2. Have completed five years of continuous service without having received paid leave for educational or professional development purposes;
- 1.3. Not have completed an NIA within the past seven years (an exception may be granted in rare circumstances at the discretion of the Provost when a faculty member has an exceptional opportunity or unforeseen, documentable circumstances);
- 1.4. Have demonstrated significant scholarly, creative, or teaching performance in the faculty's discipline;
- 1.5. Be in good standing with the university, college, unit, and department with positive reviews in their last faculty activity evaluation; and
- 1.6. Submit a full proposal package to their chair.

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2. Applicant Obligations.

The Eligible Faculty Member must meet with the chair or unit leader to discuss initial plans for requesting the NIA before submitting an application.

The Eligible Faculty Member is responsible for researching and understanding the impact of their pursuit of an NIA on their salary and retirement. The Eligible Faculty Member is responsible for meeting with HR to discuss the implications of NIA on salary and/or other benefits and a retirement representative to discuss the implications of an NIA on retirement calculations.

3. Proposal Requirements.

The Eligible Faculty Member's proposal must include: (1) a Faculty NIA Coversheet; (2) an abstract of the proposed plan; (3) Objectives of the proposed plan; (4) Literature review; (5) Timeline and workplan; (6) Outcome report plan, and (7) Eligible faculty member's curriculum vitae. The applicant may also submit other supporting documentation (e.g., references, letters from grant agencies, letters from the publisher).

3.1. Faculty NIA Coversheet.

The NIA coversheet must include a signatory line for endorsement from the faculty member's department chair or unit leader and the dean, and also a space for the signatures of the Chair of the UCFA, and the Provost.

3.2. Abstract.

The Abstract should address the specific goals of the research, project, or creative activity the Eligible Faculty Member intends to execute, and a brief description of what the faculty member plans to do. The abstract is limited to 100 words.

3.3. Objectives.

A list of clearly stated objectives and intended outcomes the Eligible Faculty Member plans to accomplish.

3.4. Literature Review.

The literature review should include an explanation as to how the work is relevant to a body of literature, scholarly knowledge, or creative activity; how the project contributes to an existing body of work; why the project is important; and why the

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Eligible Faculty Member has the specific knowledge and skills necessary to achieve the indicated objectives.

3.5. Timeline and Workplan.

The timeline and work plan should explain how the Eligible Faculty Member will execute the project during the NIA. The workplan should explain how the faculty member will ensure appropriate facilities are secured and professional contacts made. If the plan includes an invitation to carry out teaching, research, or service at another institution, the Eligible Faculty Member should include the invitation letter from the institution and discuss how the work proposed in the NIA differs from the work the faculty member would complete for ETSU. If the work involves travel, the faculty member should outline when the travel will occur and how the travel is funded.

3.6. Outcomes and Reporting.

The Eligible Faculty Member will provide a plan for reporting their work, including publishing, presenting, or executing this project; a description of how this focus time will impact their research and discipline; an explanation of how the project will contribute to curriculum development and/or student learning and how it will support the university's strategic plan.

3.7. Curriculum Vitae.

An up-to-date curriculum vitae.

3.8. Impact Statement.

The chair of the department or unit leader prepares the impact statement. The impact statement should include the potential impact of the NIA request, including any perceived impacts on the department, unit, or college's teaching, research, or service mission. The impact statement should also include a plan to reassign the work of the faculty member during the period of absence, including how the academic unit will cover the costs related to any reassigned work. The statement should describe how the proposal aligns with the strategic initiatives of the institution, college, unit, or department.

4. Compensation, Benefits, and Credited Service.

Eligible Faculty Members on NIA are eligible for:

Policy Effective Date: 04/27/18 • **Policy Revised Effective Date:** 12/11/25
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- 4.1. one semester at full pay or an academic year at one-half pay;
- 4.2. benefits for the duration of the assignment;
- 4.3. salary enhancements awarded during the NIA time period, calculated when the faculty returns to regular service and based on Institutional Base Salary; and
- 4.4. credit for time in rank for promotion, although it is the responsibility of the faculty to discuss with Human Resources how a full academic year NIA impacts retirement calculations.

5. University Committee for Faculty Affairs (UCFA).

The Provost will appoint a standing University Committee for Faculty Affairs (UCFA) in consultation with the Faculty Senate and the Deans Council. The committee will include one faculty representative from each college and one faculty representative from the library. The UCFA will review applications for NIA and make recommendations to the Provost or designee. The Provost or designee will make the final decision.

6. Review of NIA Proposals.

The UCFA will only review complete proposals. The UCFA may request an applicant to appear before it to discuss their proposal.

6.1. Evaluation of Proposals.

The UCFA shall classify the proposals for NIA as: highly recommended, recommended, or not recommended. The UCFA will evaluate each proposal based on the following:

- 6.1.1.1. Professional merits of the proposal;
- 6.1.1.2. Value to the academic unit;
- 6.1.1.3. Impact of absence on teaching or work assignment within department, library, or academic unit;
- 6.1.1.4. Alignment to institutional priorities; and
- 6.1.1.5. Potential benefit to the university.

7. Adherence to University Policies.

While on NIA, faculty are obligated to abide by all university policies, including, but not limited to the [Outside Employment and Extra Compensation Policy](#), [Conflict of Interest and Commitment Policy](#), and travel policies. If the NIA involves travel, the assignment

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will be considered official travel, and all ETSU travel policies and procedures will be in effect.

8. Remuneration for Work Completed as Part of NIA.

Faculty are eligible for remuneration during the NIA. If faculty receive remuneration during the NIA, they must report that to their chair.

9. Deferral or Decline of Awarded NIA.

9.1. Deferral of Award.

In rare circumstances, an Eligible Faculty Member who has been awarded an NIA may request to defer an awarded NIA for one year. This request may be approved if there are documented unforeseen circumstances beyond the faculty's control (e.g., FMLA, disruptions that endanger the safety and well-being of the faculty member at the approved sabbatical site, political strife, natural disaster, cancellation of contracted arrangements with an external agency necessary for the successful completion of the NIA).

The UCFA and the Provost, or designee, must approve in writing and confirm agreements for deferral of NIAs. If the NIA deferral request is approved by the UCFA and the Provost, or designee, the individual shall be eligible to apply for an NIA seven academic years from the completion date of the deferred NIA. Such NIA deferral requests must be endorsed by the chair or immediate supervisor (after consultation with the dean) at the time the NIA is requested to be taken.

9.2. Declining Award.

Should circumstances require an Eligible Faculty Member to decline an awarded NIA, they will immediately be eligible to submit a proposal in the following year. However, a proposal must be submitted and reviewed; an awarded NIA cannot be carried over to another academic year.

10. Return to Service Obligations.

10.1. Service Obligations.

For each semester of NIA (both full-time and part-time), the Eligible Faculty Member must provide a minimum of one semester of continued employment at ETSU following the assignment. If the faculty member does not provide one semester of continued employment at ETSU following the assignment, the faculty member may be required to provide reimbursement for pay received during the NIA period.

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10.2. Reporting Obligations.

Within one (1) month of returning to service, the Eligible Faculty Member must submit a report detailing their activities and accomplishments during the NIA. The report must be submitted to the chair of the academic department or unit leader, the dean of the college where the faculty member worked while on NIA, the UCFA, and the Provost.

During the semester after completion of the NIA, the individual will be invited to provide a public talk, exhibit, or performance regarding the NIA. The report, submitted after the return to service, must be used in part or in whole as the basis of the faculty member's annual evaluation.

The activities must also be reported as part of the Eligible Faculty Member's faculty activities report (FAR) and become part of the materials reviewed for the faculty activities evaluation (FAE).

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Procedures

1. One Semester NIA Timeline.

For one semester NIA, refer to the applicable semester chart below for the timeline requirements.

Fall Semester NIA Timeline	
October 30	Proposal package due to the chair for the following fall semester.
November 15	Chair adds impact statement and forwards proposal package to the Dean, indicating whether they support the proposal.
November 30	Dean submits proposal package to the UCFA, indicating, whether they support the proposal.
January 30	UCFA makes recommendation and submits proposal package to the Provost.
February 15	Provost returns the proposal package with their recommendation to the faculty, chair, dean, and the UCFA.
Spring Semester NIA Timeline	
February 1	Proposal package due to the chair for the following spring semester.
February 15	Chair adds impact statement and forwards proposal package to the Dean, indicating whether they support the proposal.
March 1	Dean submits proposal package to the UCFA, indicating whether they support the proposal.
May 1	UCFA makes recommendation and submits proposal package to the Provost.
May 15	Provost returns the proposal package with their recommendation to the faculty, chair, dean, and the UCFA.

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2. Full Academic Year NIA.

For academic year NIA, refer to the chart below for the applicable timeline. ACADEMIC YEAR NIA	
For Fall to Spring NIA Timeline	
October 30	Proposal package due to the chair for the following fall semester.
November 15	Chair adds impact statement and forwards proposal package to the Dean, indicating whether they support the proposal.
November 30	Dean submits proposal package to the UCFA, indicating whether they support the proposal..
January 30	UCFA makes recommendation and submits proposal package to the Provost.
February 15	Provost returns the proposal package with their recommendation to the faculty, chair, dean, and the UCFA.
For Spring to Fall NIA Timeline	
February 1	Proposal package due to the chair for the following spring semester.
February 15	Chair adds impact statement and forwards proposal package to the Dean, indicating whether they support the proposal.
March 1	Dean submits proposal package to the UCFA, indicating whether they support the proposal.
May 1	UCFA makes recommendation and submits proposal package to the Provost.
May 15	Provost returns the proposal package with their recommendation to the faculty, chair, dean, and UCFA.

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Applicable Forms and Websites

[Application for Non-Instructional Assignment \(etsu.edu\)](#)

Authority and Revisions

Authority: TCA § 49-8-203, et seq.

Previous Policy: Faculty Non-Instructional Assignments.

The ETSU Board of Trustees is charged with policy making pursuant to TCA § 49-8-203, et seq. On March 24, 2017, the Board delegated its authority to ETSU's President to establish certain policies and procedures for educational program and other operations of the University, including this policy. The delegation of authority and required process for revision to this policy can be found on the [Policy Development and Rule Making Policy webpage](#).

To suggest a revision to this policy, please contact the responsible official indicated in this policy. Before a substantive change to the policy section may take effect, the requested changes must be: (1) approved by the responsible office; (2) reviewed by the Office of University Counsel for legal sufficiency; (3) posted for public comment; (4) approved by either Academic Council or University Council; and (5) approved by ETSU's President.