



EAST TENNESSEE STATE
UNIVERSITY

Faculty Non-Instructional Assignment Policy

Policy Name: Faculty Non-Instructional Assignment Policy

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, tenure-track 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, tenure-track faculty member.

Institutional Base Salary

The total salary to be paid to a faculty member.

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

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Eligible Faculty Member's professional skills and standing. Approval of NIAs should reflect ETSU's mission, goals, and needs. Published materials, exhibits, or performances resulting from the assignment shall include acknowledgment of East Tennessee State University. Faculty whose application for NIA is not approved may submit a proposal in subsequent semesters.

1. Eligibility.

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

- 1.1.1. Be a tenured full-time faculty member at the rank of assistant professor, associate professor, or professor;
- 1.1.2. Have completed five years of continuous service without having received paid leave for educational or professional development purposes;
- 1.1.3. 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);
- 1.1.4. Have demonstrated significant scholarly, creative, or teaching performance in the faculty's discipline;
- 1.1.5. Be in good standing with the university, college, unit, and department with positive reviews in their last faculty activity review; and
- 1.1.6. Submit a full proposal package to their chair, dean, university NIA committee, and Provost.

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 should meet 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.

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3. Proposal Requirements.

The Eligible Faculty Member's proposal must include: (1) a Faculty Non-Instructional Assignment Coversheet; (2) an Impact Statement; (3) the Eligible Faculty Member's Curriculum Vitae; (4) an Abstract; (5) Objectives; (6) Literature Review; (7) Timeline and Workplan; and (8) Outcome Report. The applicant may also submit other supporting documentation (e.g., references, letters from grant agencies, letters from the publisher).

3.1. Faculty Non-Instructional Assignment Coversheet.

The NIA coversheet must include a signatory line for endorsement from the chair or unit leader and the dean, and also a space for the signatures of the Chair of the University NIA Committee and the Provost.

3.2. Impact Statement.

The chair of the department or unit leader prepares the impact statement. The impact statement should provide information about 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 statement about how the regular assignment for the faculty will be covered, including how costs related to additional expenses to cover faculty assignments will be covered. The statement should describe how the proposal aligns with the strategic initiatives of the institution, college, unit, or department.

3.3. Curriculum Vitae.

An up-to-date curriculum vitae.

3.4. Abstract.

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

3.5. Objectives.

A statement of what the Eligible Faculty Member plans to accomplish and achieve.

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

3.7. Timeline and Workplan.

Explain how the Eligible Faculty Member will execute the project. Provide a timeline. This statement should include an explanation of how the faculty member will ensure appropriate facilities are secured and professional contacts made. If the plan calls for work at another institution, the Eligible Faculty Member should delineate the difference between this work and the proposed NIA activities in the proposal.

3.8. Outcomes and Reporting.

The Eligible Faculty member will provide an explanation on their 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.

4. Compensation, Benefits, and Credited Service.

Eligible Faculty Members on NIA are eligible for:

- 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 the faculty should discuss how a full academic year NIA impacts retirement calculations.

5. University Committee for Faculty Affairs (UCFA).

- 5.1. The University Committee for Faculty Affairs (UCFA) will review applications for NIA and make recommendations to the Provost or designee.

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5.1.1. Membership of the UCFA.

The university UCFA committee will consist of two full-time, tenure-track faculty from each college who will serve for overlapping 2-year terms. If a member of the UCFA intends to apply for an NIA, that faculty will recuse themselves from evaluating NIA applications. The chair of the UCFA shall be appointed by the Provost. The secretary of the university UCFA committee shall be elected by a majority vote of the committee members.

5.2. 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.

5.3. Evaluation of Proposals.

The UCFA shall rank the applicants for NIA using the following three categories: highly recommend, recommend, and not recommend. The UCFA will evaluate each proposal based on the following:

- 5.3.1.1. Professional merits of the proposal,
- 5.3.1.2. Value to the academic unit
- 5.3.1.3. Impact of absence on teaching or work assignment within department, library, or academic unit,
- 5.3.1.4. Alignment to institutional priorities, and
- 5.3.1.5. Potential benefit to the university.

6. 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, conflict of interest and commitment, and travel policies.

If the NIA involves travel, the assignment will be considered official travel, and all ETSU travel policies and procedures will be in effect.

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7. Deferral or Decline of Awarded NIA.

7.1. Deferral of Award.

In rare circumstances, an Eligible Faculty Member who has been awarded an NIA may request to defer for one year an awarded NIA. 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 Provost or designee must approve in writing and confirm agreements for deferral of NIAs due to unforeseen circumstances. If the NIA deferral request is approved by the university NIA committee, the individual shall be eligible to apply for another NIA seven academic years from the completion date of the NIA. Such NIA deferral requests must be endorsed by the chair or immediate supervisor (after consultation with the dean).

7.2. 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.

8. Return to Service Obligations.

8.1. 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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8.2. 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 university NIA committee, 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.

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Procedures

Fall Semester NIA Timeline	
October 30	Proposal package due to the chair for the following fall semester.
November 15	Chair submits recommendation and impact statement to the Dean.
November 30	Dean submits recommendation and impact statement to the University NIA Committee, indicating their rank of all proposals submitted.
January 30	University NIA Committee makes recommendation to the Provost.
February 15	Provost returns recommendation to the faculty and the University NIA Committee.
Spring Semester NIA Timeline	
February 1	Proposal package due to the chair for the following spring semester.
February 15	Chair submits recommendation and impact statement to the Dean.
March 1	Dean submits recommendation and impact statement to the University NIA Committee, indicating their rank of all proposals submitted.
May 1	University NIA Committee makes recommendation to the Provost.
May 15	Provost returns recommendation to the faculty and the University NIA Committee.

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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 submits recommendation and impact statement to the Dean.
November 30	Dean submits recommendation and impact statement to the University NIA Committee, indicating their rank of all proposals submitted.
January 30	University NIA Committee makes recommendation to the Provost.
February 15	Provost returns recommendation to the faculty and the University NIA Committee.
For Spring to Fall NIA Timeline	
February 1	Proposal package due to the chair for the following spring semester.
February 15	Chair submits recommendation and impact statement to the Dean.
March 1	Dean submits recommendation and impact statement to the University NIA Committee, indicating their rank of all proposals submitted.
May 1	University NIA Committee makes recommendation to the Provost.
May 15	Provost returns recommendation to the faculty and the University NIA Committee.

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Applicable Forms and Websites

[Application for Non-Instructional Assignment \(etsu.edu\)](https://etsu.edu/policy/non-instructional-assignment)

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.