

## **SCHOOL OF OPTOMETRY POLICY**

**Date Revised:** 11/25/2025

**Effective Date:** March 01, 2021

**Responsible Party:** Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies

**Contact(s):** Timothy Kraft, PhD, Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies

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## **Policy and Procedure for Research Salary Support**

### **1. Guidelines for evaluation of extramural support, or its equivalent, in the School of Optometry.**

A• The School of Optometry currently requires a minimum of 30% salary support from sources outside the School for tenure-earning and tenured faculty. Compliance with this 30% requirement will be checked on an anniversary date of March 31 of each year by computing the average extramural salary supports from certified effort reports for the previous 12 months (UAB effort certifications are completed campus-wide twice a year for the periods April 1 to September 30, and October 1 to March 31 of the next year).

B• For those not meeting the 30% extramural salary support requirement for the previous 12 months, a calculation of the three-year average of extramural support will be done using the preceding six six-month certified effort reports (date range beginning April 1, 20XX-1, through March 31, 20XX, where XX is the present year). Faculty meeting the criterion with a 3-year average will fulfill the requirement.

C• For those not meeting the threshold with a 3-year average of extramural support, the next level of consideration is situational equivalent support, for example extraordinary amounts of didactic or clinical teaching, salary support from University level duties (outside School of Optometry), or possibly national level service. When facing a potential reduction in salary it is incumbent upon the faculty member to present any and all considerations that they deem relevant to their salary support to the Dean.

Examples of such equivalent support include, but are not limited to:

Salary funding from sources outside of the School (i.e., teaching or service paid for outside the School of Optometry).

Didactic teaching loads above a base of 40 direct contact hours/year. Currently, 40 hours of didactic teaching is considered to represent the 25% effort expected of all tenure-track faculty, thus an additional 48 hrs./year would represent 30% effort.

Clinical teaching loads and clinical lab instruction equivalent to extra mural support of 30% per year. Currently, 4 hours of clinical instruction is considered to be 0.36% effort per year, which yields ~333 clinical hours to represent 30% effort.\*

Salary supplements arising from administrative duties that are paid for by the School are excluded from the salary calculation (i.e. administrative supplements would not be considered part of the salary support subject to the 30% requirement).

Unused or unpaid incentives could be carried forward beyond the 3-year salary average (see Incentive Plan below.)

D• If, after exhausting all means of accruing equivalent support, a faculty member fails to achieve a minimum of 30% extramural support, then they will be issued a warning letter, dated October 1 of that year, stating that they have one year to regain 30% support, otherwise they should expect consequences such as reduction or loss of lab space, and/or reduction of salary up to a maximum of 13% per year. Note that in the year of the warning the faculty member is not eligible for merit raises. Loss of salary would be at a rate of one-half of the underfunding percentage, up to a maximum of 13% in a year. Multiple years of failure to meet the salary support requirement would lead to multiple salary reductions, up to a maximum of 24% (see examples/template [link](#)).

E• Restoration of the 30% minimum extramural funding would begin a restoration of salary. Restoration of salary would occur immediately for reductions of 13% or less, on the date when the salary coverage is restored.\*\* Multiple years of salary reduction will take two years to fully restore.

F• Newly hired assistant professor tenure-track research faculty are expected to achieve a minimum of 30% extramural salary support by the conclusion of their three-year start-up period. Salary support during the start-up period is encouraged but not required. The initial evaluation of extramural salary support will occur during the first regular evaluation cycle following the completion of the three-year start-up period according to the guidelines for evaluation of extramural support outlined in section 1. The evaluation will be based on the first available effort report(s) after the end of the start-up period ending March 31. A faculty member who secures extramural salary support prior to the end of the start-up period may bank the corresponding percent-effort time for application toward future expectations within the pre-tenure probationary period. After the three-year start-up period, accrued effort time may be applied flexibly to meet the minimum 30% extramural salary support requirement or to exceed 35% support, which qualifies the faculty member for earning incentives.

Examples:

A faculty member who maintains 30% extramural salary support continuously from the date of hire through the end of the three-year start-up period will accrue 36 months of 30% effort time, banked for future use within the probationary (pre-tenure) period.

A faculty member who maintains 5% extramural salary support for six months during the start-up period will accrue six months of 5% effort time, banked for future use within the probationary period.

## 2. Incentive Plan

With an established expectation of baseline performance, salary coverage appreciably above the minimum will generate incentives for the faculty member. The incentive plan rests on the guidelines and measurables for expected performance outlined above.

A• To qualify for the incentive program, tenure-earning and tenured faculty must have 35% or more of their salary support covered by non-School funds (no rounding), while non-tenure track faculty must cover 5% or more of their salary support (no rounding) in a given year. Note that extra teaching (as defined in sections 1C3 and 4) do not count as support in the incentive plan.

B• Extramural support above 60% makes one eligible for non-participation in didactic teaching without reduction of salary. However, adopting this option automatically excludes the faculty member from the

remainder of the incentive program during the years when the teaching is forgone. Any such request for exclusion from teaching by a faculty member can only be pursued with advanced notice of intention, and approval of the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, Associate Dean for Research (Graduate Program Director) and the Dean. The time period of the exclusion should be a minimum of two years.

C• Faculty performing above the incentive threshold can convert earned credit to dollar amounts. This incentive calculation is limited to the salary cap set by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) maximum. Faculty members have three options for utilizing earned incentive credits:

If the School of Optometry budget allows for funding incentives in a given year, a dollar amount will be deposited in a residuals account reserved for the faculty member. The ability of the School to provide a financial payout is determined by the Dean and the fiscal officer of the School, and it may be zero, nullifying this option for a given year.

Any unused incentive credit can be carried forward for future use as credit.

Incentive credit can be used to directly offset salary coverage effort in subsequent years.

D• Any financial payout would be at one third of salary plus fringe above the coverage threshold by extramural funds (above 35%) multiplied by a ratio of F&A recovery realized vs. that of UAB's negotiated maximum rate (2026 = 49%). The faculty member can request less than this full amount in any one year, reserving the remainder as unused incentive percent-effort credits in subsequent years.

Incentive timing;

Period of calculation April 1 of the previous year to March 31 of the present year

The ADR will review and calculate effort data between April 1 and May 31 of the each year and notify faculty of incentives earned by May 31.

Faculty will notify the ADR of their choice to accept the financial incentive or bank the incentive effort by June 30.

If approved for payouts, the incentives will be transferred to individual faculty residuals account by Oct 1 of the present year.

E• If an incentive credit is unconverted/banked to meet the salary support minimum for a three year average, or to supplement another year, then it cannot be used for a financial payout as well, and vice versa.

F• The metric for evaluating the success of the incentive plan is the mean level of salary support (percent effort) achieved by eligible faculty and the number (percentage) of faculty qualifying for the awards.

\* Amended 4/1/21, V1.0 04-02-21; Amended 11-03-22, V1.3; Amended 11-25-2025 V2.0

\*\*According to Provost's office restoration of salary in the middle of a year, whenever the grant is funded is possible (SAY 9/16/20).  
V 0.9 9-30-20