

## **MEMORANDUM**

**October 9, 2006**

**TO:** Dennis Kratz, Dean, School of Arts & Humanities  
Bert Moore, Dean, School of Behavioral and Brain Sciences  
Brian Berry, Dean, School of Economic, Political & Policy Sciences  
Robert Helms, Dean, School of Engineering & Computer Science  
George Fair, Dean, School of General Studies  
John Ferraris, Interim Dean, School of Natural Sciences &  
Mathematics  
Hasan Pirkul, Dean, School of Management

**FROM:** Robert Nelsen, Associate Provost

**SUBJECT:** Special Faculty Development Assignments

Please announce to the members of your tenure stream faculty that we are prepared to begin accepting proposals for Special Faculty Development Assignments. The academic periods for which these assignments are proposed will be Spring 2007, Fall 2007, and Fall plus Spring, 2007-2008. However, opportunities of exceptional importance for which other time periods are required should not be excluded from consideration. After review by your office, with the mode of faculty input you and your unit have decided upon, proposals, together with evaluations and recommendations, should be forwarded to my office before December 1, 2006. Final decisions will be made before December 15, 2006.

For your information and that of your faculty, I append the SFDA policy and several copies of the cover sheet that should accompany the submitted proposals.

RSN:mrk  
Attachments

## UTD Policy on Special Faculty Development Assignments

**I. Definition:** A Special Faculty Development Assignment (SFDA) temporarily (for one or two semesters) completely releases a faculty member from regular classroom teaching responsibilities in order to accomplish a major project of exceptional benefit to the university. Examples of such projects are development of new or enhanced teaching methodologies, techniques, curricula or resources; development of new or enhanced research or creative capabilities or programs; and provision of unique and important service to the university, the profession or to a government agency. The operative adjective in defining a project meriting an SFDA is *major*. Achievements in research, innovations in teaching, and valuable service are continuing responsibilities of all faculty members. The SFDA is reserved for a project whose magnitude and consequences are so significant that a full release from regular classroom duties is essential to its successful accomplishment. Other valuable projects, judged to require only partial release from classroom responsibilities, will be considered on an individual, case by case basis by the relevant dean, department/program head where applicable, and provost.

**II. Eligibility:** A UTD faculty member must have completed six regular semesters of full-time duty at UTD and have successfully passed the 3rd-year tenure review to be eligible for an SFDA. It is the university's obligation, and in its own self-interest, that valuable service as a faculty member over many years is recognized, appreciated and rewarded. However, the SFDA is not conceived to meet that priority. The SFDA is prospective, rather than retrospective. That aspect being noted, it should also be recognized that the more extended a period of successful service that a faculty member has recorded, the higher the level of confidence it is natural to have in the ultimate success of an SFDA proposed by such a faculty member. Hence, more senior faculty members on the average will have a certain advantage over more junior members, other aspects being equal.

**III. Financial Support:** Support for an SFDA will include up to 100% of regular monthly salary for a one-semester assignment and up to 75% of monthly salary for a two-semester assignment. In certain instances, limited travel support may also be available from school sources. The underlying principle for compensation during an SFDA is that the faculty member should neither benefit financially from the assignment nor, wherever possible, incur financial loss. As such, if the SFDA involves cost-sharing from a third party, the salary support from UTD will be negotiated in the context of the above principle. Availability of third-party support will not be a factor in awarding of an SFDA.

**IV. SFDA Proposals:** A faculty member should submit a cover sheet (see attached) and a 3-5 page proposal for the SFDA to the pertinent department/program head and/or dean. In addition to a full, current vita and a listing of the faculty member's teaching assignments for the previous three years (in the format specified for tenure and promotion review), the proposal should describe in reasonable detail the proposed project, the benefits to the faculty

member's professional development of the project, the benefits to the university of the project; the reasons why the project cannot be accomplished in the context of regular faculty responsibilities, and a statement that the faculty member will continue employment at UTD for at least one additional academic year after completion of the SFDA.

**V. Evaluation of SFDA Proposals:** SFDA Proposals will be evaluated initially at the school level by a faculty committee appointed by the dean. The committee may be appointed specifically for this purpose, or an appropriate existing committee can be delegated to assume this additional responsibility. Proposals should be evaluated with regard both to intrinsic merit and to expectation of success. The committee will forward to the dean all submitted proposals, specifying whether or not each proposal is recommended for positive action, and appending any appropriate explanatory commentary.

The dean will review the evaluations and recommendations of the faculty review group and also review each proposal directly, both according to the above criteria and in terms of the academic unit's capability of maintaining a high level of teaching and service while active faculty strength for regular duties is temporarily reduced by the SFDA. The dean will then forward the entire SFDA file of proposals, faculty reviews and recommendations, and decanal reviews and recommendations to the provost, recommending for approval only those proposals which do not negatively impact in an irremediable way the vital functions of the academic unit. It is expected that the necessary replacement teaching effort will be supported by funds preexisting within the budget of the faculty member's unit. In accord with emphasis on major projects, proposals for two-semester projects will be accorded a slightly higher priority than will be one-semester projects, but it is expected that a reasonable mix of the two types of SFDA proposals will be approved.

**VI. Calendar:** Proposals for the next Fall Semester and next Academic Year projects should be submitted to the office of the dean by November 1 of each year. Proposals and recommendations should be forwarded from the faculty group to the dean by November 15 and the dean should forward the complete file to the Office of the Provost before December 1. Approvals of Special Faculty Development Assignments will be announced before December 15.

**VII. Final Reports:** At the conclusion of an SFDA, the faculty member **must submit to the dean and the executive vice provost a report** which details the activities undertaken during the assignment, including publications, creative works, etc., produced, along with an analysis of the enhancements to the faculty member's professional capabilities and other benefits which have accrued to the university as a consequence of the SFDA. If third-party financing was involved in the project, a full accounting of these aspects must also be reported.

SPECIAL FACULTY DEVELOPMENT ASSIGNMENT (SFDA)  
APPLICATION

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**School:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Program:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of Submission:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Title of proposal and brief description:**

**Period(s) requested for accomplishment of this Special Faculty Development Assignment:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Spring 2007    \_\_\_\_\_ Fall 2007    \_\_\_\_\_ Spring 2008    \_\_\_\_\_ Other

**Description of any anticipated outside support for this project:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Are you currently, or do you anticipate becoming, Principal Investigator of a UTD grant or contract?**    NO \_\_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_\_

**Beginning Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Ending Date:** \_\_\_\_\_