

Approved by University Council May 10, 2018

## I Description:

The University of Houston-Clear Lake (UHCL) is committed to providing an inclusive and family-friendly workplace environment for faculty, and recognizes that there are many different types of family and domestic responsibilities. For this reason, the university offers a policy of temporary workload adjustments for acute family care situations. Policy at the university level ensures that there is consistency in how such situations are handled across departments and units in the university, and that all faculty members have equal access to assistance with acute family care situations.

Acute family care situations include pregnancy, childbirth, adoption, and serious or prolonged illness of the faculty member or of a child, parent, partner or close relative which can include but is not limited to those related via guardianship, step-family, biological family, and in-law family members.

Dissemination of this information should be widespread, so that all eligible faculty and administrators are aware of them.

## II Eligibility:

Eligible individuals are full-time faculty and administrators with teaching responsibilities of UHCL who have acute family care responsibilities.

## III Terms:

This program allows faculty members and administrators with teaching responsibilities two options.

A.. One long semester of teaching relief may be provided, in which other meaningful duties at program, department, college and/or university level are to be assigned instead of teaching duties. Teaching relief cannot be used for circumstances where use of sick leave is appropriate. The application must be approved by the Department Chair, Dean, and Senior Vice-president/Provost, based on the criteria set out below. Under the terms of this program, the teaching load of the faculty member in the semester before and after the leave will not be affected by the terms of the leave.

B. One long semester of teaching relief may be provided, in which the salary of the faculty member is reduced for each course release.

## IV Procedure:

Application – Faculty member must submit an application to their department chair and dean at earliest possible date, preferably 6 months in advance of the semester in which teaching relief is requested. In emergency situations, the application can be expedited.

Application for option 1 must include:

1. A request establishing the eligibility for the teaching relief;
2. A sufficiently detailed description of the work to be done in place of the applicant's normal teaching responsibilities;
3. A defined work product to be advanced;
4. An adequate method for evaluation of the work by the department chair, dean, or provost during the semester; and
5. The faculty member's teaching load in the semester before and after the leave must be specified.

Application for option 2 must include:

1. A request establishing the eligibility for the teaching relief and clarifying the relief requested;
2. The faculty members teaching load in the semester before and after the leave must be specified.
3. The department chair and dean must identify how the affected teaching load will be managed.

In the case that two faculty members experience the same acute family case, each may take the teaching relief, either in consecutive semesters or simultaneously, as best fits their needs and those of their department/s.

V Approval – Approval is contingent on the following findings:

- A. The proposed project must be found to be beneficial at the department, the program, the college, or the university level.
- B. The instructional responsibilities of the department or program can be met through the allocation of existing resources. The dean and provost in consultation with the department chair and faculty member may make exceptions to this.
- C. The department or program will continue to be in compliance with applicable statutes and policies, including:

1. Texas Government Code § 658.002 – Working Hours Required for Salaried Employees
2. Texas Government Code § 658.007 – Working Hours for Employees of Institutions of Higher Education
3. Texas Education Code § 51.402 – Report of Institutional and Academic Duties
4. Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board Faculty Workload Guidelines
5. Board of Regents Policy § 21.05 – Faculty Workload
6. UHCL Academic Workload Policy, established in the UHCL Faculty Handbook

Approval by SVP/Provost – The dean should submit the application to the SVP/Provost, along with his or her written review regarding eligibility and approval. Upon final review, the SVP/Provost will issue a written decision to the applicant and appropriate dean and department chair. The decision of the SVP/Provost is final.

Notification of approval is sent to: The faculty member requesting the leave, the Dean, the Department Chair, and Human Resources.

VI Consultation with Human Resources – Human Resources will be contacted by the faculty, after receipt of approval by the Provost, in order to coordinate the logistical details of the Relief. Human

Resources will advise on the timing of the relief as well as any requirements regarding how time will be coded (sick leave, FMLA, PeopleSoft designations, etc.).

## VII Clarifications and Exclusions

**Tenure clock extension:** The guidelines outlined in this document do not address tenure clock issues for faculty. A tenure-track faculty member may request separately a tenure clock extension owing to the issues raised by an acute family care situation.

**Sick leave:** These guidelines are independent of sick leave or vacation, which must be taken in situations where no duties are conducted. Thus, a faculty member will generally use either Teaching Relief or sick leave during the same reporting period. In situations such as childbirth, or recovery from an illness, a faculty member or administrator with teaching responsibilities might take sick leave for a period of time and then subsequently begin Teaching Relief. However, if a faculty member or administrator with teaching responsibilities is able to work at home for some portion of a day, a combination of Teaching Relief and sick leave or vacation leave (if applicable), may be appropriate.

**Annual reviews:** Faculty members or administrators with teaching responsibilities who have been assigned modified duties should not be penalized in annual reviews. These faculty members and administrators should be evaluated on the performance of the duty assigned rather than on the duty for which it was substituted (i.e., if a special service task is substituted for teaching then the faculty member is evaluated on the special task rather than teaching, with “normal” service rated separately according to departmental criteria).