Policy on Course Buyout Requests  
Department of Psychology  
October 3, 2018

Policy:

1. All course buyout requests for the next academic year - for BOTH faculty members and their graduate students - are due on the 4th Monday of October, coinciding with the deadline for course requests. Thus:
   a. Requests for academic year 2019-2020 (i.e., AU19 and SP20) are due by October 22, 2018

2. Requests must be submitted in writing to Mike Vasey, the Vice-Chair for Instruction.

3. Except in rare circumstances, requests made by the October deadline will be approved (see #2 under Frequently Asked Questions below).

4. Although requests made after the October deadline will be accommodated whenever possible, such approval ultimately depends on our ability to find an alternate instructor for the course in question or otherwise compensate for its loss. The closer a request is made to the start of the semester in question, the less likely its approval will prove to be possible.

5. If funds supporting a buyout request become available after the deadline, the Vice-Chair for Instruction should be alerted as soon as possible. The more lead time the Scheduling Team is given the greater the chance that a late buyout request can be accommodated.

6. If you expect/hope to buy yourself or a graduate student out of a course but are not sure you will have funds to do so, please alert the Vice-Chair for Instruction. That will maximize the likelihood that a workable contingency plan can be developed to cover the course if funds for the buyout become available.

Frequently Asked Questions:

1. Why must buyout requests be submitted so far in advance?

The Course Shell describing the department’s planned course offerings for a given academic year must be developed far in advance due, in part, to deadlines for classroom requests set by the registrar. Additionally, predictability for the entire year is essential to ensuring that students’ curricular needs are adequately met. Predictability for the entire year is also critical for the department’s budget and for justification of faculty teaching loads.

2. Why can’t buyout requests be guaranteed approval regardless of when funds become available?

Department course offerings play a critical role in enabling undergraduate and graduate student to make adequate progress toward degree. They also play vital roles in the department’s budget and in justifying faculty teaching loads. Therefore, changes in the department’s course offerings and enrollment numbers from year to year are closely scrutinized by the college. For these reasons courses in the Course Shell can be cancelled only as a last resort. Approving a buyout thus requires that the Scheduling Team have sufficient time to find an alternate instructor for the course or to make other arrangements to compensate for its loss. In some cases, especially for courses involving highly specialized knowledge, it may be impossible to find an appropriate replacement within the available pool of associated faculty and GTAs.