**Course Releases to Enable Professional Development**

**for Lecturers and Senior Lecturers**

**(Approved Feb. 25, 2015)**

The English Department values professional development for lecturers/senior lecturers:

* We complete annual activity reports, and one section asks for evidence of professional development activities during the year.
* Continued professional development is a major criterion when a lecturer is considered for promotion to senior lecturer: “Continuing commitment to professional development, reflected in progress toward advanced degrees, scholarly and creative activities, and/or fundamental improvement of course content” (English Department Bylaws, Section 3.6.).
* The reputation of the department is enhanced by having lecturers and senior lecturers who are engaged in professional development activities. However, teaching a 4/4 load—and especially teaching a 4/4 load of writing-intensive classes—leaves little time for professional development beyond mandatory activities such as the fall workshop.

We propose a system whereby two lecturers/senior lecturers (full-time, benefitted employees) per year are offered a 3/3 or a 4/2 teaching load to allow them time for professional development. These course releases would be offered to people in order of seniority; should someone pass on this opportunity, it will be made available to the next person in the seniority line. The releases will eventually rotate through all eligible lecturers/senior lecturers in the department.

We do not wish this program to be competitive; instead, we would like all lecturers/senior lecturers to be encouraged to take advantage of it.

Lecturers/senior lecturers who are eligible for the course release program and who wish to take advantage of it will submit a brief written proposal to the department chair. Proposals that relate to the first-year composition program or to the WID program would also be reviewed by that director. If necessary, the lecturer might be asked to revise the proposal in order to make it acceptable.

Professional development will relate in some way to a course that the lecturer/senior lecturer is teaching or would like to teach, typically first-year composition or WID. Some options are listed below:

* Enhance one’s professional credentials (1) by taking an undergraduate course in a discipline represented in a WID course, or (2) by taking a graduate-level class during the semester of the course release or during the summer if there will be a summer scholar in residence.
* Revise or develop a course she/he currently offers or plans to offer.
* Conduct research related to a course or courses she/he is teaching.
* Prepare a presentation that relates to a class he/she is teaching for a professional conference. The person would have the release time during a semester that would include a submission date late in that semester or early in the next semester

The person who receives the release time will provide a written report to the chair as an addendum to his/her annual activity report. In addition, he/she will share with the department the results of the professional development in some way. For example, those whose professional development activity fits with the writing program might present at the fall workshop or at a brown bag session.