

Summer Salary FAQ

What is summer salary?

Summer salary is defined as any compensation paid during the summer period to a faculty member in excess of his or her academic-year salary. The summer period is defined to be the period outside Institutional Base Salary of the academic year appointment.

How is summer salary calculated?

Federal regulations stipulate that summer salary (Per Uniform Guidance Summer Salary is referred to as “period outside of the academic year pay”) supported by sponsored programs must be “computed and paid at a percent effort rate not in excess of the faculty member’s official Institutional Base Salary (IBS) divided by the number of months in the period for which that IBS is paid.” Therefore, the summer salary for full-time 9-month faculty members working in the summer must be paid at a rate not to exceed 1/9th of the annual IBS of the academic year for each of the three months of the summer period. Summer salary is limited in each case by the terms of the supporting grant or contract and must be in accordance with granting agency policy.

Can I receive summer salary for my work on a sponsored program done during the academic year?

No, Federal regulations stipulate that summer salary from sponsored programs “must be for actual work performed on the sponsored program from which the funds are paid and must be paid for personal services performed during the period stipulated.” A faculty member cannot be paid in the summer period for work that was done on a sponsored program in the previous 9-month academic year, nor can the faculty member be paid for work that will be done in the following 9-month academic year. Grant and contract sponsors require written Certification of Effort reports signed by the faculty member that document the time and effort spent on a sponsored program during the period in which the grant work was carried out and for which an individual is being compensated. The payment of summer salary obligates the faculty member to provide the proposed percentage of effort work on the sponsored program for the full period for which compensation is paid.

Example: Professor Smith’s IBS for the 9-month academic year is \$90,000 and she proposes to devote 40% effort to a sponsored project during one month of the upcoming summer. The summer salary to be charged to the sponsor for Professor Smith’s work/effort on the project will be paid at the rate of 1/9th of \$90,000 or \$10,000 for each month of the summer. Because her percent effort on the project will be 40% for one summer month, a total of \$10,000 x 0.40 or \$4,000 will be allocated for Professor Smith’s summer salary.

If the sponsor will pay it, can I receive summer salary at a rate that is greater than my rate for the academic year?

No, The University of Oklahoma adheres to federal regulations, which specifically prohibit the use of sponsored program funds to “increase or supplement faculty salaries above the institutional scale for an individual’s salary.”

If I receive three months of summer salary from sponsored projects, can I write proposals or do administrative work?

No. If an investigator receives three months of summer salary (i.e. 100% effort) from sponsored projects, the funding agencies do not allow for time to write proposals, teach, work on other research, or do significant administrative work beyond brief consultation with graduate students, handling an occasional non-project-related phone call or email, or attending a short, rare administrative meeting.

What happens if I am working on more than one sponsored program in the summer?

A faculty member may work on more than one sponsored program and receive summer salary from each one, but no more than 100% effort is committed each month to the combination of the sponsored programs. In addition, the faculty member must include in the cumulative total of effort any other university responsibilities during the summer (e.g., departmental administration, student advising, curriculum review, teaching, professional development). Charges to grants and contracts for summer research activities must be consistent with the level of effort devoted to each grant or contract during the period identified and with the funding provided.