Policy for Permanently Reduced FTE Appointments

This policy addresses a request from a staff member to permanently reduce the percentage of their appointment (e.g., going from 100% or 1.0 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) to 80% or .8 FTE). For purposes of this policy a permanent reduction is one that lasts 12 months or more. The assistant dean/department director approves reductions of shorter duration. This policy does not supersede opportunities for changes in employment status related to the Family Medical Leave Act or other human resources policies.

The relatively small number of division staff in comparison to the overall student body makes every staff position important and some responsibilities difficult to redistribute. Requests for reductions will be balanced against the reality that the primary means of achieving the division’s mission requires staff to be readily available to students and colleagues.

The staff member, through a conversation with their immediate supervisor, should initiate this discussion and then follow it up with a written request that includes: a) the amount of FTE reduction, b) when the reduction would start, and c) the potential impact of the reduction on students, the department, and campus colleagues. The supervisor will review the request. If it is supported, the request will be advanced and reviewed at each stage of the departmental supervisory structure. The associate dean will have final review and approval. In most circumstances a final decision will be rendered in writing within six weeks of the initial written request. An employee whose request is granted should consider it a permanent reduction because the FTE typically goes back to the division to be reallocated as needed.

The following are some of the primary considerations when reviewing a request:

1. What has the employee’s job performance been to date?
2. If granted, would the employee stop performing some of their current responsibilities? If so, which ones?
3. How will the department address any duties no longer performed by the employee? (e.g., covered by existing or new staff person)
4. Is the FTE reduction large enough to hire another employee or can it be paired with another unassigned FTE (within department or across the division) in order to make a new hire possible?
5. What is the impact of the appointment reduction on other department employees, students and campus colleagues?
In most circumstances, the division is not inclined to approve permanent FTE reduction requests for the following situations:

1. Management level positions such as department directors/assistant deans, associate directors, assistant directors and positions that supervise professional staff members. Supervisors need to be readily available for consultation with their supervisees and other members of the department leadership team. The responsibility for supervision and leadership inherent in these positions is difficult to redistribute without creating an undue burden on colleagues.

2. Reduction of any type of professional employee’s position by less than 50%. The exception is if there is other unassigned FTE available within the department or across the division that can be paired with it to create another position that is 50% or more. If a staff member gives up less than 50% of their position (e.g., a 25% reduction) the small amount is generally less desirable to most prospective employees thus limiting the department’s ability to backfill for the reduced position.

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