



SUNY ONEONTA

PROVOST AND VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Instructional Release Time (IRT) Procedural Guidelines

This *Instructional Release Time Procedural Guidelines* document has been updated to reflect the current process used for requesting, approving, and reporting course releases for full-time faculty. The update maintains the intent and eligibility defined in the original *College Handbook* (2013) but clarifies procedural steps, approval authority, and accountability measures. This revised version formalizes established practice, ensuring consistent application across all schools while maintaining oversight by the Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Purpose

Teaching responsibilities and loads for SUNY Oneonta full-time faculty have been established. However, faculty members may receive reductions to their teaching loads, known as “instructional release time” (or “course release”), for participation in a university program that entails release for scholarly activities, pedagogical development, or service that require time commitments. Faculty may also independently request instructional release for scholarly, pedagogical, or service work that similarly advances university priorities and requires extraordinary time commitments.

Rationale

The purpose of the IRT Procedural Guidelines is to document and clarify existing processes related to instructional release time, including eligibility, review, approval and reporting. The IRT Procedural Guidelines are intended to promote transparency, consistency, and shared understanding across academic units.

Applicability

The IRT Procedural Guidelines apply to all SUNY Oneonta full-time faculty at SUNY Oneonta who seek or are granted instructional release time under existing institutional practices. It does not establish new eligibility criteria or entitlements.

Current Practice

Instructional release time may be considered for activities that extend beyond a faculty member’s normal responsibilities because of their scope, complexity, or strategic relevance. The examples below reflect common categories under which instructional release time has historically been approved, but approval is not limited to these categories:

- Leadership development opportunities.
- Instructional or curriculum development.
- Research and scholarly activity.
- Specific service activities, such as assignment to special university projects or committees.
- Professional development activities or retraining aligned with departmental needs.
- Administrative assignments such as department chair or program director/coordinator.
- Other professional or scholarly activities deemed appropriate by the dean or provost.



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Procedures

The following procedures describe the steps currently used to request, review, approve and document instructional release time.

1. University Programs with Built-In Release Time:

University programs that include instructional release time for participants will communicate the terms of that release to department chairs and deans in advance, to support course scheduling and planning.

2. Individual Requests for Instructional Release:

Faculty members seeking instructional release time outside of a formal program with built-in release time, must complete the **Faculty Instructional Release Form**. This form must include:

- A description of the intended activities
- A timeline for completion
- Expected outcomes and a statement of the benefits to the department, school and/or institution

3. Departmental and Dean Review:

- The faculty member discusses the request with the department chair prior to submission.
- The department chair reviews the proposal for alignment with departmental needs and scheduling implications.
- The completed form is forwarded to the dean for review and approval.
- The dean evaluates requests based on alignment with institutional priorities and the likely benefits to the university.
- The dean serves as the Provost's designee for approval of instructional release requests.
- If denied, the dean will provide reasons in writing.
- The faculty member may appeal a denial to the Provost in writing within five (5) working days of receiving the Provost's denial communication.

Approved releases will be reflected in the semester's course schedule.

4. Accountability and Reporting:

- Faculty members who receive instructional release time are not eligible for overload teaching during the same semester.
- Within one month after the end of the semester, faculty must submit a brief (approximately 250-word) report to the department chair and dean summarizing:
 - The work completed and outcomes achieved.
 - Any deliverable produced.
 - The impact of the activity on teaching, scholarship, or service.
- Reporting deadlines will be included on the Academic Affairs Administrative Calendar.



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5. Records and Documentation:

Records related to instructional release time approvals and reports will be maintained by the respective dean's office in accordance with current administrative practice.

Forms

[Faculty Instructional Release Form](#)

Contacts

Questions related to the daily operational interpretation of this policy should be directed to:

The Office of the Provost
(607) 436-2517
provost@oneonta.edu

Effective Dates

Approved by the Provost, Enrique Morales-Diaz, on 4/1/2026

Accepted by:

Dia M. Carleton

Dia M. Carleton, CHRO

Date: April 1, 2026

Shirley Clark, Oneonta UUP Chapter President

Date: 4/1/2026