



Memorandum

To: R. Michael Banish
President, Faculty Senate

From: Robert A. Altenkirch
President

Christine W. Curtis
Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

Subject: Response to Faculty Senate Resolution 18/19-06 Establishment of a
Defined Period for Start-up Awards at UAH
Passed 3/28/19; Received 4/18/19

Date: April 30, 2019

Faculty Senate Resolution 18/19-06 entitled "Establishment of a Defined Period for Start-up Awards at UAH" requests the following:

"Assistant Professors who start at UAH will be permitted to use the full amount of start-up funds that they negotiate in writing at the start of their appointment throughout all years of their academic appointment up to the time of the submission of their tenure and promotion dossier without any reservations over that period that changes will be made in the amount of the start-up funds or to the time when the start-up funds must be expended."

"All Assistant Professors at UAH who are still in their probation period toward tenure, who have not yet submitted their tenure and promotion dossiers, who had negotiated amounts of start-up funds when they first entered UAH, and who subsequently had any portion of those initial start-up funds taken from them for whatever reason will have all such funds returned to them by the start of the Fall semester of 2019 and will be allowed to expend those funds under the same terms as the above clause."

Startup funds, by definition, are funds distributed to new faculty members for initiating their research. The University provides startup funds to new faculty members to purchase computers, software, databases, laboratory equipment, and supplies to set up their research programs and, where applicable, their laboratories or studios. In

some instances, the University also designates startup funds for the support of graduate student stipends and tuition and summer salary for new faculty members.

After the startup period of two to three years, the faculty member is responsible for sustaining their research programs by seeking extramural research grants and contracts from federal and state agencies, industry and businesses, and foundations.

UAH's startup policy is to allocate the funds to the new faculty member for two years and to allow the faculty member to request a third year with a written justification. The University clearly states the parameters including the length of the startup funds in the offer letter to the new faculty, which the new faculty member signs to accept the offer. The offer letter statement regarding the startup timeframe reads as "The start-up package is for two years with a possible extension for one year upon request to the Office of the College of ----- Dean and the Office of the Provost."

In late fall 2014, we reviewed the Ledger 3 accounts and noticed that some faculty who were tenured and other individuals who were in their fourth and fifth year still had substantial funding in their startup accounts. As stated earlier, by definition, startup accounts are funds that the University allocates to new faculty members to assist them in setting up their research program; they are not funds to be held for a long time. In a March 27, 2015, memorandum, the Office of the Provost established a defined period for startup awards as stated below.

"III. B. Startup Accounts.

1. Startup Accounts are now designated as having a two-year time limit. Offer letters need to state clearly that the startup package is for two years with a possible extension upon request to the funding sources, the Office of the College Dean, Office of the Provost and sometimes the Office of the Vice President for Research and Economic Development. The startup funds may be extended by one year only by the offices that fund the startup.
2. Funds remaining in the startup accounts after two years or, if granted an extension, after three years, returns to the sources funding in proportion to which it the startup was funded.
3. Because there are some startup accounts for individuals who have been here a number of years and some in fact who are tenured, those faculty members who have had startup accounts for more than two years will be alerted in writing by their dean of the status of the account and notified that the startup account will be dissolved on May 1, 2016, and the monies returned to the original sources in proportion to their original funding for future university investments."

Sufficient time was given to faculty members to expend their startup funds after the March 27, 2015 memorandum was issued. Faculty members who had held the funds beyond two years were given more than a year to expend the funds. Those who were in their initial two-year period were given an extension of a year for three years.

University resources are limited and are typically designated for a purpose. Funds need to be used for the designated purpose or returned to the source so that they can be used for other pressing needs. The current defined period for startup funds of two years with a possible extension to a third year, a reasonable period of time in which to start up a research program, remains in place to address the objective of the previous two sentences.