

## Claiming Banked Credits for Course Releases Principles and Guidelines

November 7, 2022

### Background:

The banking system for periodic course releases was established in April 2020, and went into effect in Fall 2020. The original document describing the banking system outlined the criteria and process through which faculty members may accumulate points, but only vaguely described how accumulated points can be “cashed in” for course releases. This document was developed in consultation with the Division Chairs and the Associate Dean for Faculty Development, and outlines the principles and guidelines for converting accumulated points into one or more course releases. The principles and policies outlined here are subject to revision by the Dean of Oxford College and Senior Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.

### Process:

1. Each November, accumulated points data are shared with Division Chairs to determine which individuals are eligible or near eligible for course releases in the upcoming academic year. Note that individual faculty members can always view their own points in the Academic Portal.
2. Eligible individuals who want to request a course release using banked credits must **submit a formal request to the Division Chair by December 1** of the year prior to the academic year in which the individual would like to apply the credits; i.e., by December 1, 2022 for use in Fall 2023 and/or Spring 2024.

Depending on the number of points accumulated, faculty may request a release from 1, 2, or 3 courses (or their equivalent) during an academic year.

The request, which can be described in a short paragraph, must contain the following information:

- a. The number of banked credits that the individual will apply towards a course release or releases. Standard lecture courses (3-4 credit hours) require 8 points; Lab+lecture courses require 12 points.
- b. The preferred semester or semesters (fall and/or spring) in which the release is requested, and a brief rationale for this preference. If banked credits will be applied in conjunction with a sabbatical, please note that as well.
- c. A list of the courses typically taught by the faculty member in the semester of the proposed release(s), noting which course(s) are anticipated to be impacted by the course release and their role in the curriculum.
- d. Given (c), a brief discussion of whether the courses would need to be replaced, and suggestions for how (e.g., can likely be covered by other Oxford faculty or require an adjunct hire). Note: not all courses can nor will be replaced by adjunct hires, and the hiring of adjuncts is subject to need and availability of funds.

3. The Division Chair will review the course release request and the eligible credits. The review will include consideration of other faculty with planned leaves or course releases in the same semester. The Division Chair may follow up with additional questions for the faculty member requesting the release.
4. By January 15, the Division Chair submits the course release requests for the division to the Sr Assoc Dean of Academic Affairs, along with a plan of how the courses will be covered in the upcoming academic year. The plan may or may not include requests for adjunct positions (part-time or full-time) to cover the courses.
5. The Sr Associate Dean of Academic Affairs may request additional information before approving the course release requests.
6. The Division Chair works with the Sr Associate Dean of Academic Affairs to finalize the plan for the course releases, including the hiring of adjunct faculty (when necessary).

**Considerations:**

- Requests for course releases will be considered in the context of the need for the college to offer an excellent educational experience to Oxford students.
- Course releases, while both earned and deserved, impact the curriculum (offerings and continuity) and the budget, and thus require careful planning both within the discipline and division, and at the college level.
- While we will aim to honor all course leave requests as proposed, requests may be deferred for up to a year for reasons including other planned leaves, to balance staffing, curricular coherency and continuity, and budget.
- Not all courses will be replaced. If hiring is needed, the faculty member requesting the release will need to be involved.