



University of Delaware College of Engineering Faculty Departure Policy
July 2023

When a faculty member decides to resign and leave the University, our priorities are to express our gratitude for their service, to encourage them to remain our colleagues and collaborators, and to minimize any potential negative impact on our students. We wish the separation of personnel from our campus to go as smoothly as possible and with recognition that departing faculty may have financial obligations on our campus that will extend beyond their leave date (e.g., to complete funded research projects, to support continuing graduate students).

With these aims in mind, when a faculty member officially declares plans to leave the University, they should submit a written plan to the Department Chair and Associate Dean for Academic Affairs (ADAA) that addresses the issues below. The faculty member, Department Chair, and ADAA should then work together to edit the plan as necessary, with input from the Associate Dean for Research and Entrepreneurship (ADRE) and Chief Financial and Administrative Officer (CFAO). In cases in which the faculty member is working with a research center or institute outside the department, that unit should be engaged in the conversation as well. The final plan must be approved by the Dean.

Students and post-docs

If the departing faculty member is currently advising students and/or post-docs, there should be a clearly defined plan for how those students and post-docs will continue to be advised and supervised after the faculty member leaves. The plan should include specifications about how students will be funded, whether their affiliation will stay with UD, and how degree progress will occur (e.g., what classes are needed for degree completion). Note that UD policy permits a faculty member who leaves UD to continue on the student's dissertation committee as long as the professor was officially on the committee prior to their departure. The departing professor has the option to continue or not, however. Another full-time faculty member in the program is often added to the student's dissertation committee as co-chair.

Research grants

Remaining sponsored project funds for which the faculty member is the principal investigator may often be transferred to a new employer, with unit head and sponsor approval. When possible, funding for continued support of graduate students remaining at UD should be subcontracted back to UD, with a UD PI being named. Note that faculty members who take a position at another institution CANNOT remain as a PI on sponsored projects at UD following their departure. It is important to keep in mind that grants and contracts with external sponsors include legal obligations that must be considered as part of such transitions, and faculty and units should work with the ADRE and Research Office to be sure that these are handled properly.

In case there are remaining sponsored project funds for which the faculty member is the principal investigator, and for which transfer to another institution is not allowed or is not the preferred option for sustaining the research, another faculty member who is capable of carrying out the research shall be assigned as PI and take over management of grant funds, with unit head and sponsor approval. Otherwise, the funding will be returned to the sponsor.



Discretionary financial resources

In the absence of another plan, unexpended discretionary funds revert to the College. If the departing faculty member would like to use them to support students or other activities in the interest of the department, college, or university, or if the funds came from sources other than the College, a reasonable plan for termed support should be proposed. This plan will be subject to review and approval by the CFAO.

In general, using discretionary funds to cover the costs of travel to conferences or symposia is permitted provided the commitment to attend was made before the faculty member's decision to resign and the event occurs before the faculty member's separation date.

Any and all remaining reimbursements/expenditures from any departing faculty members' research accounts shall be approved by the Department Chair. Such expenditures should be limited to reimbursements of costs already incurred.

Space

The faculty member should vacate their office, lab, and other space upon their departure. In some cases, a reasonable plan for termed occupancy may be proposed. Once vacated, all space reverts to the College.

Equipment and supplies

The plan should explain how all pieces of equipment and supplies that have been acquired while at UD will be reallocated or disposed of prior to the faculty member's departure. Equipment asset tags should be referenced in this plan when applicable. This plan will be subject to review and approval by the ADRE. In some cases, with approval from the Department Chair and ADRE, the faculty member may purchase equipment at its current fair market value and take it with him or her. No approval should be given for equipment purchased after the faculty member's intent to resign was known.

Special appointments

In some cases, to allow the departing faculty member to continue advising students or contributing to UD in other ways, s/he may receive a special appointment, such as Affiliated Faculty member, following procedures described in the Faculty Handbook [Section 4.1.2](#).