Faculty Transition Procedural Guidelines

This document provides general guidelines to department chairs for actions to take when a faculty member resigns. There are many reasons for a resignation. This discussion is oriented to faculty who are recruited to another academic institution. Some of the items discussed here come as a surprise to departing faculty, so chairs should make faculty aware of these guidelines. They should be brought to the attention of any colleague known to be considering an outside offer.

A departing mid-career faculty member often has a large and active research program. There are conflicting needs and goals in this situation, even for the department and University. On the one hand, we will want to maintain good relations with the departing colleague. We may want to hire their students in the future. Their colleagues may review our grants. We may have ongoing collaborations. At the same time, they are enjoying the use of university facilities and possibly funds. These resources should be used to maintain the continuity of their junior associates and students’ work, and to insure a smooth transition. In cases where University funds are not needed for those purposes they should be returned to the Department, College, or Provost (depending on the source of the funds). University policy requires that these and the following issues be dealt with in a forthright, transparent, and humane manner.

1. HR
   a. Date of resignation established
      The first item of business is to establish the date of termination. This must be either December 31 or May 31. A formal letter of resignation must be provided at the time the faculty member accepts another institution’s offer. This letter should be forwarded to Deb Erskine in Academic Affairs along with the appropriate layoff & termination form.
      • For December 31 resignations the last paycheck will be issued at the end of December and benefits will terminate on December 31.
      • For May 31 resignations the last paycheck will be issued at the end of June and benefits will terminate on May 31.
      • The University of Michigan is not responsible for benefits after the date of termination. Faculty who may have a gap in their benefits coverage should consider COBRA coverage (http://www.benefits.umich.edu/events/cobra.html) or contact their new institution.
      • Note that a faculty member can submit a resignation any time that they wish. However their salary is “earned” by their academic year teaching. Although a faculty member may leave on Aug 31, they have not yet earned their salary for that academic semester, so the pay they receive the end of July and August should be returned.
   b. LSA policy on leaves
      LSA leave policy prohibits faculty who have accepted an offer at another institution from taking a leave.
   c. Repayment of prior leaves
      If you do not return from a paid leave and take a job at another institution, the University will seek reimbursement from your new institution.
d. **Recruitment & Retention commitments**
   All commitments from a prior recruitment or retention offer end with the date of the faculty member’s acceptance of an offer from another institution or on May 31 of the year of that acceptance, whichever is earlier. In general, summer ninths compensation cannot continue once the faculty member has accepted a position at another institution. (See section 4)

e. **Provide layoff notification for research staff who will not move to new institution or transfer to other grant(s).**
   If the faculty member is providing support for postdocs, research scientists, or staff, and there is not a clear plan for them to remain at Michigan, then they must receive a layoff or termination notification per University policy specific to their position.
   Working with the department, the departing faculty member must ensure that a source of funding is in place to support the employee up to the termination date.

f. **Make transfer arrangements for support personnel**
   If postdocs, research scientists, or staff are transferring to the new institution, coordinate start and end dates with that institution.

g. **Review for visa issues involved for any personnel**
   If any of the postdocs or research scientists have visas coordinate with the International Center ([http://internationalcenter.umich.edu/](http://internationalcenter.umich.edu/)).

2. **Finance**
   a. **Freeze and determine status of discretionary accounts**
      Any discretionary account under the faculty member’s control must be recaptured at the time the other offer is accepted. It is possible, even probable, there will continue to be legitimate expenses charged to the discretionary accounts, but these must have approval by the Chair or Chair’s designee, in consultation with the Divisional Associate Dean. If there are substantial funds remaining in discretionary accounts the funds should be returned to the units (Department, College, Central Administration) in proportion to the original funding. (see [http://www.provost.umich.edu/reports/discretionary/policy_statement.html](http://www.provost.umich.edu/reports/discretionary/policy_statement.html))
   
   b. **Research support from a recruitment/retention agreement**
      Any outstanding contributions and/or balances in the faculty member’s discretionary account which were part of a retention agreement are forfeited effective May 31 of the year in which the other offer is accepted.
   
   c. **Discretionary account in deficit**
      A deficit in a discretionary account must be covered by the faculty member prior to departure.
      A check should be written to the *University of Michigan*. Note this is not a tax-deductible contribution.

3. **Graduate Students**
   a. **Assess impact on Graduate Students**
      Identify all graduate student committees with the faculty as a member, cognate, chair, or co-chair and develop plans to minimize disruption
   
   b. **Students who will move to new institution**
      Some graduate students may elect to transfer to the new institution. Verify that the faculty member and graduate student are in agreement on transferring, and verify that the student is aware of the transfer policies of the new institution. International students will need to have the sponsor for their visa transferred. Contact the International Center ([http://internationalcenter.umich.edu/](http://internationalcenter.umich.edu/)). Some doctoral students may have earned enough UM credit to receive a master’s degree; however this needs to be evaluated on a case by case basis.
   
   c. **Students who will remain**
      Some graduate students may choose to remain at Michigan. Those who are near completion of their PhD may finish their current line of research. The departing faculty member may remain as a co-chair of the dissertation committee and a new local co-chair will have to be identified for the student. A plan for funding the student will need to be developed. Note that even if the student relocates physically to the new institution but is expecting to remain a
Michigan student and receive a Michigan degree, he or she will continue to enroll and pay tuition to UM; see: https://lsa.umich.edu/lsa/faculty-staff/graduate-education/continuous-enrollment-policy.html

Tuition fellowships may be available to pay the UM tuition costs. If, however, the student remains a GSRA on the departing faculty member’s federal grants, federal rules specify that graduate student tuition and stipend must be paid together. When the departing faculty member is not the chair of the dissertation committee, the faculty member may remain as a member. If the faculty member plans to withdraw from committee membership, the student(s) must be notified so that they may identify a replacement faculty member for the committee.

d. **Supervision plan for remaining students**
   Some students in midstream will choose to switch to a new advisor. The chair or director of graduate studies should assist these students with identifying a new advisor and funding and ensure that a funding plan is in place during the transition.

4. **Grants**
   a. **Determine which grants are active**
      Identify all active grants, including ones with no-cost time extensions, and grants that have terminated but not yet closed. Some grants may be single PI and some may have multiple co–PI’s. Establish the total amount spent and amount remaining on each grant.
   b. **Determine which grants will move with PI.**
      All federal grants are made to the University of Michigan, not to an individual faculty member. Sometimes the sponsor will allow the grant to move to the new institution. Sometimes they will not. Sometimes the grant will be terminated, sometimes it will be allowed to finish. The faculty member should be in contact with their agency program manager, and ORSP should contact the funding agency.
   c. **All final reports should be submitted and effort certified before faculty leaves the university.**
   d. **Identify alternate PI if needed**
      In some situations a grant may be providing support for graduate students who will remain at Michigan until they finish. While the grant can remain at Michigan, a new PI will have to be appointed to manage the grant.
   e. **Identify existing cost sharing accounts and how the commitment will be met.**
      If a grant has formal cost sharing commitment, then the funding agency requires these funds to be expended, or costs transferred from the grant to the cost sharing and the grant balance returned to the agency.
   f. **Review grants to ensure compliance with uniform guidelines.**
      Any expenditure under the uniform guidelines found unallowable must be cleared before the grant can be transferred or closed. Usually this means transferring the costs of the items from a grant to a discretionary account. If the faculty member has discretionary accounts this should be done before the accounts are closed.
   g. **Identify all outstanding grant proposals**
      If the faculty member is the PI on outstanding proposals, the proposals must be withdrawn and resubmitted from the new institution. Care should be taken to address any UM cost sharing commitments related to those proposals. If the transitioning faculty member is a co–PI, the remaining PI’s must contact the funding agency and develop a plan to continue the research.
   h. **Determine need for a summer appointment and/or visiting appointment**
      If the faculty member has active external funding, there may be a need for an appointment from June 1 to August 31 to accommodate the transition. For example, the faculty member may have summer effort on a grant. Contact Deb Erskine in Academic Affairs for further guidance on appropriate title.
i. **Determine need for a continuing appointment after start date at new institution**

In some situations, an affiliation or visiting appointment at Michigan will be needed even after the start date at the new institution if grants are still in the process of being closed or transferred. Communication with the new institution is required to ensure that there is not a conflict.

5. **Equipment & Other UM Property**

It is important to note that all items purchased through the University of Michigan are owned by the University or in some cases by the funding agency. If the faculty member has a research lab there may be equipment which has to be disposed of. The formal ownership also extends to samples or specimens. It may be the situation that specialized equipment or samples can only effectively be used by the faculty member at the new institution and can be sold to them. Or it may be that other UM researchers can use the equipment. Coordination with the UM Property Disposition Office is necessary for all equipment disposition.

   a. **Inventory equipment**

   It is important to inventory the equipment in the departing faculty member’s lab. There are several categories in the inventory. Capital equipment which is tagged and listed in Property Disposition should be clearly identified along with the source of funds used to purchase the item. A second category is equipment which, although it falls below the threshold of capital equipment, is significant and identifiable, such as laptop or desktop computers. The final category is supplies, which do not have to be individually identified, but may be listed in aggregate.

   It is important to identify the source of funds used to purchase the items in the inventory in order to establish ownership. Equipment that was purchased on a grant that is still active is likely the property of the funding agency. Equipment that was purchased on startup funds, grants that have expired, or other University resources is property of the University.

   b. **Disposition of property**

   Equipment that was purchased on an active grant remains the property of the funding agency. If the grant is being transferred to the new institution, it is likely the purchased equipment will also transfer. This should be coordinated through Property Disposition and the appropriate worksheet will need to be completed.

   Items which were purchased on a grant where title has devolved to the University or from startup or other general funds should be assessed for other use within the University. This is especially important if the grants had co-PI’s and the faculty member’s collaborators have an interest in the equipment.

   If there is no one interested in the equipment, samples or specimens, they may be declared surplus and be dispositioned through the Property Disposition Office at fair market price. The new institution may then acquire the equipment. Note that while the equipment disposition must be processed through Property Disposition, it does not physically have to move through Property Disposition. If it is being purchased by the new institution, it can be shipped directly from the lab. However, nothing may be moved until payment is received and Property Disposition has given approval. Items purchased with general funds should have the proceeds distributed to the unit(s) in proportion to the original funding. Items purchased from grants should have the proceeds returned to the unit’s research incentive account. Packing, transportation arrangements and shipping costs are the responsibility of the gaining institution.

   c. **Closing the lab**

   LSA Facilities should be informed that the lab is being closed. After the equipment has been removed from the lab contact OSEH for decommissioning:

   [http://www.oseh.umich.edu/guidelines/ld.shtml](http://www.oseh.umich.edu/guidelines/ld.shtml)
6. **LSA Museums**
   a. **Collections**
      Inquire with the faculty member whether there are any museum collections on loan to another institution. This information should be confirmed against legal loan documentation on file with the collection managers who will contact the borrowing institution to establish status of the loan. If the faculty member has any collections in their possession at the museum which are on loan from another institution, the collection managers will contact the lending institution to determine the loan time line and coordinate the return of the objects. The collection managers will work with the departing faculty member, as well as all of their students who have access to collections, to ensure that collection materials (including permits and inventory of all specimens or artifacts and equipment) are returned and secured in their designated housing.

7. **Wrapping up**
   Some additional actions to take prior to departure are:
   a. Faculty member signs effort certification form
   b. Notify LSA IT to have access to shared drives removed
   c. Arrange access to all CTools/Canvas sites the faculty member owns
   d. If the faculty has a PCard cancel it
   e. Any equipment that has been provided for off-campus use must be returned
   f. Remove from department email groups
   g. Return university keys and UM ID
   h. Remind faculty member to cancel parking arrangements and claim their initial deposit
   i. All grant final reports must be submitted