

2007-2008 Group on Faculty Affairs  
AAMC Listserve Queries & Responses

**Query: Bridge Programs**

*Question from Judith Ockene, UMass ([Judith.ockene@umassmed.edu](mailto:Judith.ockene@umassmed.edu)):*

We are about to implement a "Bridge Program" as a way of helping women (and men) have more flexible options to allow them time to succeed if they have life events that require them to take some time off. Our recommendation is: "Create an administrative and institutional financial mechanism so that select faculty have the opportunity to contribute to teaching, research or clinical practice part time for discrete periods of time while being supported financially and professionally."

This mechanism will complement existing UMMS Faculty Promotion and Tenure guidelines:

- Opportunity to participate is open to all UMMS/UMM faculty.
- Explicit criteria for participation will be determined, including possible factors such as the faculty member's current and future contribution, length of service, number of faculty in the department already participating, and available funding.
- The opportunity to become part time may also include some agreed upon (between the Chair and the faculty member) flexible work schedule that benefits the department and the faculty member.
- Alternative models and financing may be needed to support the different roles and requirements of clinical, research and teaching faculty, but each would offer comparable benefits to the faculty member.

**Resources Needed:**

To facilitate faculty becoming part-time:

- A two-year pilot program would initiate this program.
- Up to twelve opportunities will be available competitively – expecting that approximately half of the twenty-four departments would have a participant.
- The financial commitment would be approximately 50% salary and benefits for each participant.
- To fund these priorities, UMMS and UMMHC need to identify existing or additional philanthropic funds.

We are now about to develop the criteria, the communication plan, and the model for implementing the bridge program. It would be helpful to know if anyone has done something like this in your own school, and what the particulars and experiences have been. I'd be happy to compile your answers and share with you what we work out.

**Responses:**

*From Paula Trief, SUNY Upstate ([triefp@upstate.edu](mailto:triefp@upstate.edu)):*

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Sounds very interesting, and I'd definitely be interested in the program you design. At SUNY Upstate, we do have part-time faculty, but it's up to the faculty member and the chair to work this out. We also have some disgruntled faculty whose chairs will not even consider this alternative.

But, we have no institutional policies to guide this or make it consistent.

Looking forward to what you learn and formulate.

*From Richard Thurer, University of Miami Miller SOM ([rthurer@med.miami.edu](mailto:rthurer@med.miami.edu)):*

Attached is our part-time policy at the Miller School of Medicine, University of Miami. It has been in place for over 3 years and has been helpful to us and generally worked well.

<https://www6.miami.edu/faculty-senate/FacultyManual.doc>