

Academic Leaves of Absence Guidelines
Faculty of Arts & Sciences
Washington University

A tenured faculty member with a specific plan for scholarly work may apply for an academic-year leave with half pay or a one semester leave with full pay after completing at least twelve semesters of teaching since the previous leave or since arriving at Washington University. Taking a paid leave obligates the faculty member to return to active service in Arts & Science for at least the number of semesters he or she was on paid leave.

In the Faculty of Arts & Sciences we value both research and teaching. We recognize that scholarly research sometimes requires an extended period free of teaching and other obligations. The faculty member who takes a leave returns to the university refreshed and revitalized, having accomplished significant research. The university benefits from the fresh outlook that is brought back to the classroom and the campus, as well as from the recognition in the wider community that scholarly accomplishment by our faculty brings to us.

At the same time, we owe it to our students and to our colleagues to have our faculty available on campus and in the classroom. The possibility of taking sabbatical leave is "earned" by time spent on campus and in the classroom.

The following guidelines (based upon the September 9, 1992, memorandum from the Dean of Faculty to the Faculty of Arts & Sciences) govern leaves in the Faculty of Arts & Sciences.

1. Options for Leaves with Pay: Paid academic leaves of absence (leaves with salary paid by the university) are normally granted as either:

- A. full academic-year (two consecutive semesters) leave with half salary from the university, or
- B. one-semester leave with full salary from the university.

Pay is based upon the faculty member's academic-year professorial appointment salary, exclusive of any additional pay (chair or director salary, summer salary, stipends, etc.).

2. Outside Funding: Faculty are encouraged to seek grants or other sources of external funding that will provide the other half salary to complement the half salary from the university during a full academic-year leave. Such grants may be paid directly to the faculty member by the granting agency, or they may be received by the university and paid to the faculty member by the university, depending on the policy of the granting agency. However, if university funding is used, the total of the university funding and the outside funding may not exceed the faculty member's regular full-time academic-year salary.

IMPORTANT NOTE: A leave for faculty involved in sponsored research requires that all questions concerning agency policy, procedures, and approval be addressed and coordinated through the Office for the Vice Chancellor for Research (OVCR) and approved in writing prior to the leave taking place.

- A. A clear plan should be developed, illustrating how the faculty member intends to maintain engagement with the project if he or she is serving as principal investigator.
- B. Faculty salary charged to sponsored funds during a sabbatical/leave should reflect the actual work performed on the project.
- C. Questions concerning the appropriateness of allocating leave costs to sponsored projects should be addressed by Human Resources and Sponsored Projects Accounting.

Written approval from OVCR concerning continuing effort on the sponsored project(s) and for the use of those funds for salary support must be appended to the leave application form (see application page 1 section D).

3. Leave Eligibility Requirements: A sabbatical leave may be granted on request of a faculty member, subject to approval of the department chair (and joint program chair/director, where applicable) and the dean of the Faculty of Arts & Sciences provided the following requirements are met:

- A. The faculty member must be tenured at the time the leave begins. (see section 4 for Pre-tenure leave information)
- B. The faculty member has been in residence teaching at Washington University for at least six full academic years (twelve semesters) since a previous sabbatical leave, or if this is the first such leave, since joining this Faculty. If a faculty member takes an approved unpaid leave (see 9, below), medical leave, parental leave, other personal leave, competitive fellowship leave, A&S Center for the Humanities Fellowship, or similar leave, the period of that leave does not count toward the twelve semesters of teaching and residence required for eligibility for a paid academic leave of absence.
- C. The faculty member has a specific plan for research or other scholarly activity related to his/her position at Washington University.
- D. The proposed timing of the leave will not cause significant problems with the program or function of the faculty member's home department or joint program.
- E. The faculty member will return to regular faculty status at Washington University following the leave. The faculty member must return to Arts & Sciences for at least the number of semesters he or she was on paid leave. Failure to do so will require the faculty member to reimburse Washington University the amount of gross compensation (including benefits and other payments and contributions) paid by the University during the leave of absence.

4. Exception for Pre-tenure leave for Tenure-Track Faculty: Arts & Sciences recognizes that a leave during the probationary period, prior to consideration for tenure, may be particularly valuable for a tenure-track faculty member. A pre-tenure leave does not count as a sabbatical leave and reset the sabbatical clock. However, time spent on a pre-tenure leave does not count toward the twelve semesters of service required for a regular sabbatical leave, either. Requirements A and B in Paragraph 3, above, may be waived for an untenured, tenure-track faculty member who has completed at least three years in residence teaching at Washington University, if the department chair/director and dean of Arts & Sciences agree that the person is making good progress toward earning tenure and that the early leave of absence is likely to advance the professor's scholarly research. Additional exception may be made for circumstances or scholarship that necessitates a leave in the third year, when appropriately justified. Special consideration may also be extended to faculty who begin at Washington University with countable prior tenure-track service at another institution and did not already take a prior, paid sabbatical, or for requests for unpaid academic leaves. The leave must be taken prior to the tenure review year or any early tenure review or notice of non-renewal.

5. Timing of Leave: Leaves are not automatic entitlements every seven years. The timing of leaves depends both upon the research program of the faculty member and the needs of the department. Department chairs/directors must balance legitimate requests for leaves against the requirements of the department's curriculum and the needs of its graduate students. Arts & Sciences cannot permit too many leaves in a department during a single academic year. Similarly, leaves cannot be taken automatically whenever a faculty member receives an external grant that would support a leave. Faculty members should inform department chairs/program directors in advance of applying for grants which would require leaves, and the chairs/directors must consider how such a leave could be accommodated within the program of the department.

6. Non-accumulation of Leave Eligibility: While leaves of absence, under appropriate circumstances, may be taken as often as every seven years, for many faculty members they are less frequent. Eligibility to apply for a leave does not accumulate; e.g., a faculty member who has had no leave for twelve years is still only eligible for a one semester leave at full pay or a one year leave with half pay.

7. Timing of Application for Leave: It is essential that department chairs/directors be able to plan in advance for leaves by their faculty. Accordingly, **faculty expecting any leave (with or without pay from the university) must request permission from the department chair** (and joint program chair/director, where applicable) **no later than November 1st prior to the academic year of the leave.** Arts & Sciences recognize that external grants or research arrangements may not be firmly set a year in advance, and thus the request for leave may be

tentative. **The formal application for any leave of absence in Arts & Sciences must be submitted to the office of the Dean of Arts & Sciences no later than January 1st to be considered for the subsequent academic year.**

8. Formal Application for a Leave: Applications for any leave must include the following:

- A. A completed Arts & Sciences Academic Leave of Absence Application Form, which includes the date the applicant joined the Washington University faculty and a list of all leaves since then, including the extent of university contribution to salary during each leave;
- B. The department chair's (and joint program chair/director, where applicable) endorsement of the research plan and statement of the effect of the leave on the department (N.B.— usually this is included on the form specified in 8 A, above, but may require more detailed information depending upon the circumstances of the department):
 - 1) Who else in the department may be on leave?
 - 2) Will the department need temporary faculty for essential courses, or will regular faculty cover the courses, or will it be acceptable to omit courses?
 - 3) What will be the effect on graduate students?
- C. A one-page synopsis of the faculty member's preliminary research plan for the leave, and the understanding that the faculty member will submit to the dean of Arts & Sciences a one-page final report upon the completion of the leave.
- D. If the faculty member will have active, sponsored projects ongoing during the leave, a copy of written approval of the leave by the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research.

9. Leaves without Pay: Faculty members may take semester or academic-year leaves without pay, subject to approval by the department chair and the dean (and joint program chair/director, where applicable). Such a leave does not replace a paid leave of absence, but neither does the period of such a leave count toward the twelve semesters of teaching and residence required prior to a paid leave of absence. E.g., if one had a sabbatical leave in the fall semester of the academic year 2010-2011, then the next such leave could take place no sooner than the spring semester 2016-2017 provided the intervening six academic years are spent in residence with normal teaching; but if a one-year leave without pay were taken during that period, then the sabbatical eligibility would be postponed until spring of 2017-2018.

10. Exceptions to the Leave Guidelines: In unusual circumstances leaves may be requested that do not fit the above rules. In such cases an explicit agreement in writing must be made among the faculty member, the department chair (and joint program chair/director, where applicable), and the dean of Arts & Sciences on the terms of the leave and the effect it may have on the timing or terms of subsequent leaves.

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