

COLLEGE of CHARLESTON

OFFICIAL DIVISIONAL POLICY

Academic Affairs Division

Sabbatical Leave Policy

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1.0 Purpose

1.1 Definition

Sabbatical leave is paid time exempt from normal duties granted to faculty members for the accomplishment of professional development programs.

1.2 Eligibility

Tenured faculty members and Senior Instructors in their sixth successive full academic year of full-time academic service at the College of Charleston since initial appointment or since a previous sabbatical leave year may apply for sabbatical leave to commence during the following year. Unless specifically requested and granted by the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs (hereafter, "Provost") at the time a leave of absence was taken, years of leave do not count toward the six successive years of full time service required for a sabbatical leave. Unless otherwise indicated in an appointment letter, years in a visiting appointment do not count towards the six years of full-time service.

1.3 Purpose and Priorities

Sabbatical leave is paid time exempt from normal instructional and service duties granted to faculty members to engage in intensive research and creative activities and professional development programs, thus facilitating their growth as a scholar and teacher. The quality

of the project, quality of the submitted proposal, and the potential impact of the proposed sabbatical will be primary factors in decisions to support a sabbatical proposal.

Additionally, priority will be given to strong proposals from tenure-stream faculty members who are applying for their first sabbatical from the College of Charleston. This includes tenure-track faculty members who are undergoing tenure review in the current year and who have accumulated the requisite years of service to apply for a sabbatical. It also includes tenured faculty members who have not yet had a sabbatical from the College of Charleston. For faculty members who have already had a sabbatical from the College of Charleston, preference will be given to academic-year sabbaticals over semester-long sabbaticals, in recognition of the positive impact on faculty research and development.

Chairs, deans, and the Provost will also be responsible for monitoring the balance of academic-year and semester-only sabbaticals to ensure the sustainability of the College's sabbatical program.

1.4 Duration and Pay

Sabbatical leave may be granted for the academic year at two-thirds of the base salary or for one semester at full salary. Calendar year sabbaticals are awarded only as approved exceptions and only if warranted by the nature of the sabbatical research proposal. In the case of a calendar year sabbatical, the credit towards the next sabbatical starts accruing with the first academic year in which the faculty member is fully off sabbatical, just as is the case for semester-length sabbaticals.

Normally, a faculty member on sabbatical leave will relinquish all administrative duties (and associated stipends) in which he or she might otherwise be engaged. Faculty members anticipating a sabbatical are encouraged to secure funding for their sabbatical projects through external grants. Normally, compensation for services including sabbatical leave salary during the period may not exceed the faculty member's salary for an equivalent period at the College. During the sabbatical leave, the College will continue both payroll deductions and employer's contributions, as determined by the sabbatical year salary, for medical insurance, FICA, retirement and any other programs that may be applicable.

Sabbatical leave comprises an investment by the College in the long-term productivity of the faculty member. A faculty member must agree to return to the College of Charleston for one academic year of service following any academic year during which sabbatical leave is taken, or repay all compensation (base salary, plus the College's share of fringe benefits) received from the College during the sabbatical. Faculty members accepting a sabbatical leave must sign a written statement to this effect.

2.0 Procedure

2.1 Initial Solicitation

The call for sabbatical proposals will be issued by the Office of the Provost each fall, typically by September 15.

2.2 Role of the Faculty Member

An eligible faculty member who wishes to apply for sabbatical leave will prepare a formal proposal using the guidelines that follow (Sections 3.2 and 3.3) as an outline.

2.3 Role of the Department Chair

Each proposal shall be reviewed by the faculty member's Department Chair (or, if appropriate, the Program Director if the Program Director is the faculty member's supervisor). If necessary, the Chair will discuss the sabbatical leave plan with the applicant. The Chair will provide a written recommendation that explains the conditions under which she/he would approve or reject the request. The Chair will also include a statement indicating how the department will cover the courses normally taught by the faculty member seeking sabbatical leave. The Chair's recommendation will be submitted with the faculty member's application to the appropriate academic Dean.

Any proposal that the Chair cannot support will be returned to the faculty member with an explanation. Within ten days of receiving a negative recommendation from a Chair, a faculty member may appeal to the Dean who will decide whether or not to include the proposal among those she or he recommends to the Provost. (See Section 2.5.)

2.4 Role of the School Reviewing Committee

Each Dean will appoint a committee of faculty members within her or his school to review and evaluate requests and provide the Dean with appropriate feedback regarding the strengths and weaknesses of each proposal from their School.

2.5 Role of the Dean

After receiving all the completed proposals and accompanying recommendations from Department Chairs and the School Reviewing Committee, the Dean will rank the proposals. The Dean shall specifically confirm or revise, as necessary, the Department Chairs' plans for covering courses.

In a cover memo to the Provost accompanying the sabbatical requests, the Dean will indicate what funds, if any, are required to pay for courses that would be taught by the sabbatical applicant. This memo should indicate the cost to the department of the courses funded from within the department or school as well as any costs which the Provost will be asked to fund. The Dean will then submit the ranked proposals for consideration, along with any rejected proposals, to the Provost.

At this point, the Dean should notify an applicant if the applicant's request has been denied. Faculty may appeal denied sabbatical requests directly to the Provost. The appeal must be made within fifteen (15) working days of receiving the denial.

Deans are also asked to provide constructive feedback to faculty members who are considering reapplying in a subsequent year.

2.6 Role of the Provost and the President

Proposals for sabbatical leave are normally due from Deans to the Provost on November 15, with Deans' ranked recommendations and supporting comments due on January 15. Adjustments to this [calendar](#) may be made at the discretion of the Provost. The Provost will review recommendations for sabbatical leave based on the guidelines (see Section 3.0). While the goal of the Provost is to assure that the College is supporting quality proposals, the Provost can also be expected to review the total costs of sabbatical leaves in light of the institutional priorities. The Provost may deny sabbatical leave proposals that are otherwise acceptable and of high quality when she or he has decided that the institution does not have the funds to pay for additional instruction.

The Provost will make recommendations for sabbatical leaves to the President. In February, the Provost will notify each applicant in writing of the President's decision regarding the support of each proposal. The President's decision regarding the sabbatical application is final. Within two weeks of notification of the awarding of a sabbatical, the applicant must notify the Office of the Provost in writing as to whether or not the sabbatical will be taken and must return their signed sabbatical agreement by that date.

2.7 Delaying or Deferring a Sabbatical

A Program Director, Department Chair, and/or a Dean may recommend approval of a sabbatical request while recommending that the faculty member delay taking that sabbatical for one year. The basis for making such a recommendation should be the need to meet curricular requirements, and the delay should not count in determining eligibility for sabbatical in the future. This recommendation will be made by the Chair and Dean (or by the Dean) to the Provost. It takes effect with the approval of the Provost.

A faculty member who has been awarded a sabbatical may request a delay. The Chair, Dean and Provost will make every effort to accommodate the faculty member. The effect of the delay on the eligibility for future sabbaticals will be noted by a memorandum from the Provost approving the delay. Otherwise, the delay will set back the eligibility for the next sabbatical. Applicability of this policy on deferrals to current Department Chairs and certain Program Directors is addressed below.

2.8 Changes in Terms of Awarded Sabbaticals

Once a sabbatical has been awarded, any requests for changes in the terms of the sabbatical (including deferrals and changes from full-academic-year to a semester or vice-versa) must be made in writing through the Department Chair and Dean to the Office of the Provost. If a change is approved at all levels of review, the Office of the Provost will issue a new sabbatical award letter and new agreement form. Changes in sabbaticals are not in effect until the change request has been approved, the new sabbatical award letter issued, and the change accepted in writing by the faculty member. Change requests must be made at least 30 days in advance of the commencement of the approved sabbatical or the proposed revised sabbatical, whichever is earlier. Changes in sabbaticals that have already commenced will be considered only under extenuating circumstances, such as FMLA leave for a serious medical condition.

2.9 Sabbaticals by Department Chairs

A faculty member is normally *eligible to apply for a sabbatical leave* under the terms of the sabbatical policy while in her or his sixth year of full time academic service since initial appointment or since a previous sabbatical leave. Because of the leadership needs of departments, restrictions are placed on the sabbatical terms and conditions for a currently serving Department Chair, even if the faculty colleague is eligible in terms of years served. A Department Chair typically serves a first term of five years.

A Department Chair may not take a sabbatical leave during a first term as Chair. Plans for a sabbatical during a second term should be discussed with the Dean during any reappointment discussions. With the approval of the Dean, a Chair in a second term may apply through the usual process for a sabbatical. The Chair's sabbatical proposal and the recommendation by the Dean must include a description of how the Chair's duties will be covered during the period of the sabbatical.

In this case, deferrals are addressed as follows: A Chair who is eligible for a sabbatical during a term of appointment and who must delay a sabbatical, either because the term is the Chair's initial term of appointment or because, in a later term, in the Dean's judgment, the leadership needs of the department require that the Chair defer applying, may request that up to three years of deferral be counted toward eligibility for future sabbaticals. Approval of this request by the Dean and Provost will be dependent on evidence of ongoing research and the assessment of the Dean and Provost of the likelihood that the faculty member would be successful in an application for sabbatical.

As with other faculty on administrative appointments, a Chair relinquishes both the Chair's duties and compensation for the Chair's appointment while on sabbatical. That is, compensation during the sabbatical period is based on the faculty member's nine-month base salary according to the terms of the sabbatical policy.

In cases where a currently serving Program Director has supervisory responsibilities for tenure-track, tenured, or other roster faculty, the Dean may determine at any time, and for any reason or for no reason, subject to the review and determination of the Provost, that some or all of the provisions of this Section shall be controlling for the sabbatical terms and conditions of a currently serving Program Director. A decision to do so shall be communicated by the Dean in writing to the Program Director. Such a decision may be appealed to the Provost; the decision of the Provost regarding such appeals is final.

3.0 Guidelines

3.1 Applicability of the Guidelines

The Department Chairs, School Reviewing Committee, Deans, and the Provost shall use the guidelines that follow as the basis for evaluating requests for sabbatical leave.

3.2 Guidelines for Preparation of the Proposal

A formal, typed sabbatical application should include the following four (4) items.

a. *A cover letter.* The letter should include the project title, a very brief summary of the proposed use of the leave, and an indication of the period for which the sabbatical leave is requested (i.e., Fall, Spring, or full academic year).

b. *A proposal.* The proposal may be up to four single spaced pages in length (with at least a 12-point font). It should offer a clear, well-organized, and detailed description of the individual's planned activities that can be understood by non-experts. In addition, the proposal should indicate clear anticipated outcomes (e.g., publication, acquisition of a new skill or competence, new course syllabi), and should address the criteria listed in section 3.3.

c. A copy of the applicant's *Curriculum Vitae*.

d. *Evidence regarding the accomplishments of the most recent sabbatical* (if applicable). Each applicant must include a copy of the final report from their most recent sabbatical. If the sabbatical produced additional results after the final report was submitted, it would be helpful to update the final report.

The completion of a sabbatical application containing these four (4) items is a minimum expectation for application consideration and does not assure a favorable decision where the application is concerned.

The applicant will disclose any additional salary she/he will receive as a direct result of the sabbatical leave. This statement will include a budget from any grants or similar proposals that the applicant has submitted in anticipation of a sabbatical leave. The applicant will

report any changes in the external funds that she/he receives to the Department Chair, Dean, Office of the Provost, and the Office of Research and Grants Administration.

3.3 Guidelines for Evaluation of Proposal

A sabbatical leave proposal must be consistent with the candidate's plans for professional development as discussed with the Department Chair in prior years' annual evaluations. Proposals that involve pedagogical research, writing, or study are legitimate; however, revisions of courses are not acceptable. The following specific criteria for evaluation will be considered:

Consistency with Purpose and Priorities of Sabbatical Program

- A. Is the proposal for the “faculty member to engage in intensive research and creative activities and professional development programs, thus facilitating their growth as a scholar and teacher?”
- B. To what extent does the proposal meet the priorities and preferences identified in Section 1.3?

The Quality of the Project

- A. How significant is the project for the discipline or disciplines involved?
- B. How will the results benefit the College and the professional development of the investigator? Will the project result in desirable program changes, teaching innovation, publication, external funding, exhibition, and/or performance? In what form will this product be delivered to the College?
- C. Is the logic, methodology, or plan adequate to achieve the proposed results?
- D. Is the proposed time schedule realistic?
- E. Based on the evidence presented (including the proposal, the curriculum vitae, and faculty member’s use of previous sabbaticals), is the faculty member likely to complete the project successfully?

The Quality of the Proposal

- A. Is the proposal clear, well-organized, and understandable to non-experts? Is the proposal complete and fully detailed in describing the project?
- B. Is the proposal well-written and carefully proofread?

C. Does the proposal show familiarity (in references, bibliography, etc.) with the work that is most important to the proposed project?

The availability of internal or external funding is not a criterion for evaluating proposals.

4.0 **Completion of the Sabbatical**

All sabbatical recipients will submit a final report to the Office of the Provost within two months after returning to the College describing all activities and work conducted during the sabbatical leave as well as the degree of success achieved in meeting the objectives set forth in the application. Copies of this report should also be forwarded by the faculty member to the appropriate Program Director, Department Chair and Dean. Within two semesters after returning from sabbatical leave, the faculty member will present (some or all of) the results of the leave to an audience at the College of Charleston. Failure to submit a final report or failure to present the results of the sabbatical to an audience at the College will make the faculty member ineligible for future sabbaticals.

5.0 **Policy Manager and Responsible Department or Office**

Provost (or Provost's Designee), Office of the Provost

6.0 **Departments/Offices Affected by this Policy**

Office of the Provost
All Deans, Departments, and Academic Programs

7.0 **Procedures Related to this Policy**

None

8.0 **Related Policies, Documents or Forms**

Faculty/Administration Manual
[Sabbatical Calendar \(academicaffairs.cofc.edu/documents/sabbatical-calendar.pdf\)](http://academicaffairs.cofc.edu/documents/sabbatical-calendar.pdf)
Sabbatical Award Letter and Sabbatical Agreement Form

9.0 **Review Schedule**

Approved: August 2017
Approved: August 2018
Approved: September 2020
Next Review Date: October 1, 2025

Signed: Suzanne Austin
Suzanne Austin, Provost