

Faculty Sabbatical Leave

Scope and Purpose

This Policy applies to all full-time faculty members.

The sabbatical leave program supports the ODU mission to advance knowledge, support academic excellence, and maintain faculty vitality by providing opportunities for educational, artistic, or professional growth by:

1. Providing time for scholarly activity that may also enhance teaching effectiveness.
2. Enabling faculty members to develop, refine, or acquire techniques in teaching, clinical care, research/discovery, and administration/service, either in the faculty member's original discipline or in a new area.
3. Allowing for structured study in an area where expertise is needed for the teaching function of the institution and is not otherwise available to the University.
4. Supporting faculty in writing books or papers, conducting work in a research laboratory, pursuing clinical training at another medical center or medical school, or taking formal courses in an accredited institution of higher education in a relevant discipline.

A sabbatical leave is a privilege awarded based on individual merit, institutional need, and the quality of the proposed activity.

Eligibility

Tenured faculty at the University or tenure-eligible Associate Professors or Professors in the School of Medicine (SoM) or School of Health Professions (SHP) are eligible to apply for sabbatical leave after completing six years of continuous service.

A faculty member is eligible to apply for an additional sabbatical leave provided that five years of continuous service at the University have elapsed since the faculty member's return from the previous leave. An exception may be made in the case of a faculty member who has been requested to defer an approved sabbatical for the convenience of the University. Such an individual will be eligible for another leave five years from the completion date of the originally requested assignment period. To protect the interests of faculty members asked to defer, the appropriate Executive Vice President must approve and confirm agreements for deferral in writing.

Types and Length of Leave

Faculty members may be granted:

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AALT Review Complete
Ready for Faculty Senate Review

Note that we reviewed this policy earlier but this is now a version that has been merged with the EVMS policy.

The wording was changed from Research and Development Assignment to Sabbatical.

We made a few sensible changes - see resolved comments.

Deleted: Preamble

This merged policy document combines the key elements of the previous policy documents. ... [1]

Deleted: at the University, including faculty in the School of Medicine ... [2]

Commented [A3R2]: yes we accept that

Deleted: <#>The purpose of sabbatical leave program is to provide ... [3]

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Commented [A4]: does it need to say 'medical' or 'research' ... [6]

Commented [A5R4]: leave as is

Commented [A6]: If this sentence stays in, then should be ... [7]

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Deleted: members holding tenured positions

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Commented [A8]: why are SOM and SoHP being singled out ... [9]

Commented [A9R8]: is accurate - keep language.

Commented [A10R8]: keep as is

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Deleted: at the University

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Commented [A11]: It would be helpful if the deferral was ... [10]

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1. A one-semester leave with full compensation (100% of base salary)
2. A two-semester (academic year) leave with half compensation (50% of base salary)

For faculty members on 12-month contracts, sabbatical leave may be for six months or less at 100% compensation, or seven to twelve months at 50% compensation.

The Executive Vice President may establish a limit on the number of sabbatical leaves to be awarded during one semester or 6 months for 12-month faculty.

Compensation and Benefits

For one-semester leaves, a faculty member shall receive regular compensation from the University.

For one-year leaves, a faculty member shall receive one-half compensation from the University during this period and may accept outside employment. If the faculty member accepts outside employment for more than one-half of the contractual salary, the reimbursement from the University will be adjusted accordingly.

For SOM and SHP faculty, funding of the base salary while on sabbatical will be derived from the same funding sources that paid the faculty member while not on sabbatical, except that any salary component derived from extramural research funds will instead be derived from other funds.

All institutional benefits will remain in force during the leave period. The faculty member will be responsible for paying their portion of the premiums for benefits.

Application Procedures

Applications for leave must include:

1. A detailed proposal outlining the program of research, study, or development to be undertaken during the leave period.
2. Evidence of the faculty member's qualifications for conducting the proposed activities, including documentation of previous accomplishments and publications.
3. A justification in terms of department, college/school, and University needs in relation to long-term planning.
4. Anticipated results of the leave, including anticipated publications, grant proposals, or new/revised courses.
5. For development assignments, evidence that the faculty member has been admitted to a course of study, has made arrangements for participation or internship in a relevant organization, or can otherwise demonstrate that the purposes of the assignment can be carried out.

Applications must be submitted to the appropriate academic department chair, who will evaluate the request, and if recommended, give assurance that the faculty member's usual teaching

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Commented [A12]: This contradicts our changes to the fellowship policy that acknowledge that faculty may have additional housing or other expenses during the leave.

Commented [A13R12]: We removed the phrase

Deleted: , provided that they accept no other outside employment during the semester

Commented [A14]: same comment

Commented [A15R14]: How would this ever be enforced?

Commented [A16R14]: remove phrase

Deleted: provided that the total income during the academic year does not exceed the faculty member's contractual salary

Commented [A17]: Why do we need this paragraph? It is not specific to SOM and SoHP -- it is highlighting that grant funded faculty may have funding issues. If they are grant funded, then the expectation is that they continue to work and be paid from that grant during the sabbatical leave.

Commented [A18]: what premiums?

Commented [A19R18]: Is this referring to maintaining benefits?

Commented [A20]: sabbatical

Commented [A21R20]: yes

Commented [A22]: I believe that there is a form for the application

Commented [A23R22]: <https://www.odu.edu/sites/default/files/2024/documents/research-development-assignment-request-form-vs-2.pdf>

Commented [A24R22]: add link to the form

Commented [A25]: What is the chair does not support the leave due to resources, lack of plan or faculty who has failed to meet annual expectations? This implies that the chair will recommend all requests.

Commented [A26R25]: done

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assignments and service activities will be adequately covered and justify the faculty member's need for such a leave. Concurrently with the departmental review, if the faculty member has active or pending sponsored projects, they must contact the Research Foundation to coordinate award management during the leave. The faculty member must, in consultation with SPA, confirm whether the sabbatical will maintain committed effort on each award or trigger sponsor prior approval (e.g., a >25% effort reduction or disengagement >3 months), establish an interim PI/oversight plan if required, and—if traveling internationally—complete an Export Controls review for travel, data, software, and equipment.

Commented [A28]: This should not be the department chair's responsibility to find coverage for teaching, service and administrative duties. The applicant should secure those.

Commented [A29R28]: ok

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Commented [A30]: [Mention was removed] [Mention was removed] added language FYSA

Commented [A31R30]: OK

The application will then proceed to the Dean of the college/school and to the appropriate Executive Vice President for final review and approval.

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Submission timelines:

- For leave scheduled to begin in the fall semester: Applications must be submitted no later than January 15 of the previous academic year.
- For leave scheduled to begin in the spring semester: Applications must be submitted no later than September 1 of the same academic year.

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Commented [A32]: Shouldn't this include the benefits also?

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Commented [A34]: Not clear exactly what this means - is this meant to reflect the schedule or repayment?

Commented [A35R34]: fixed

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Deleted: Faculty members must submit a report of the activities during the leave to the Department Chair, Dean, and Executive Vice President or Provost upon completion of the leave period. The report should detail accomplishments in relation to the original proposal. ¶

Commented [A36]: Annual reviews do not reach the EVP or Provost's office that granted the leave. Shouldn't the report be delivered to the entities who granted for program evaluation purposes?

Commented [A37R36]: do not change

Commented [A39R38]: it was moved.

Deleted: Award Criteria ¶

A Sabbatical leaves is are not awarded automatically after six years of service, but are a privilege awarded based on the basis of individual merit, institutional need, and the quality of the proposed activity

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Department chairs must certify that the courses normally assigned to the faculty member will be covered during the leave. ¶

Responsibilities Upon Conclusion of Leave

Recipients of sabbatical leave are required to return to full-time service of the University for at least one academic year. Failure to return to university service for one academic year shall create an obligation for the faculty member to pay the University an amount equal to the compensation and benefits the faculty member received during the sabbatical leave from the University.

With the next annual review, the faculty member shall include a report on their research or development accomplishments during the assignment.

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This merged policy document combines the key elements from both the EVMS Sabbatical Leave policy and the ODU Faculty Research and Development Assignments policy. This integrated approach:

1. Establishes a common eligibility framework (6 years of continuous service)
2. Preserves the specific provisions for SOM and SHP faculty while creating a unified process
3. Maintains the compensation models from both policies (one semester at 100% or full year at 50%)
4. Creates a consistent application timeline and procedure
5. Establishes clear responsibilities for faculty upon returning from leave
6. Sets unified criteria for approval of sabbatical requests

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does it need to say 'medical' or make broader 'at another higher education institution'

Page 1: [7] Commented [A6]

Author

If this sentences stays in, then should be moved to the first paragraph.

Page 1: [8] Commented [A7R6]

Author

This sentence was moved here from the end of the policy.

Page 1: [9] Commented [A8]

Author

why are SOM and SoHP being singled out? This policy applies to ALL ODU faculty.

Page 1: [10] Commented [A11]

Author

It would be helpful if the deferral was in writing. Often these are verbal agreements - can you go later so we do not have two people out at the same time? Is that a deferral?