

## Leave of Absence Policy

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In May 1990, Northwestern University moved to develop explicit policies regarding faculty leaves of absence. The University recognized the need for its faculty "to engage in research and professional and research leaves." The present section responds to the requirement that each School publish policies and procedures for faculty leaves of absence. This policy was adopted in 1991 by the SESP faculty on the recommendation of the Executive Committee.

In the School of Education and Social Policy, tenured and tenure-track faculty may request paid leaves of absence for activities that will contribute to their research, scholarship, or professional development. As noted in the May 1990 University statement, professional development includes such activities as "the preparation of grant proposals, efforts to develop expertise in a new field, and the acceptance of visiting positions at other institutions." Leaves may be applied for at any time so long as the proposed leave conforms to general University policies (e.g., normally no more than three quarters of leave will be taken during any six year period). A leave should benefit an individual by enhancing his or her capabilities or performance as a faculty member, i.e., benefit his or her research, teaching, or service.

Applications for a leave of absence are to be submitted to the Dean by January 15 of the preceding year. The application should specify the purpose of the leave, the activities to be performed during the year, and arrangements for handling relevant teaching and administrative responsibilities. Faculty will continue to be responsible for directing doctoral dissertation research during any leave. Elective courses will typically not be offered during the leave. We assume fellow faculty members will act collegially, helping to assume responsibilities for required courses, student advisement, and so on, in the expectation that such conduct will be reciprocated when their term for a leave is due. Some additional teaching services may need to be purchased on a fee-for-service basis. A faculty member's salary while on leave will be reduced by a reasonable amount to fund such costs. The objective is to make leave financially feasible for faculty members while not imposing additional costs on the School to fulfill needed teaching responsibilities.

In applying for a leave, paid or unpaid, a faculty member should consult his or her program area and its coordinator. The program area should make a recommendation on the granting of the leave, and should assess and communicate to the Dean its assessment of the adjustments which would have to be made and their monetary costs.

The Dean shall reply by March 1 to each application for a leave of absence. A leave is not a sabbatical. A sabbatical is a right to paid leave which accrues as a consequence of a fixed number of years of service. Rather than an entitlement, the May 1990 University statement specifies that the Dean, with the advice of the relevant program coordinator, will employ the following criteria to evaluate the request for a paid leave:

- the faculty member's rational and plan of leave
- the faculty member's prior performance and achievements
- the faculty member's past leave history
- the impact on the program or school in meeting its educational mission
- the financial impact on the school

In accord with University policy, the Dean communicates recommendations to the Provost; all leaves must have final authorization from the Board of Trustees.

The table at the end of this section specifies the teaching load and salary associated with leaves of different lengths. The first column indicates the length of the leave. The second column indicates the reduction in a faculty member's teaching load for that year, the amount of the reduction depending on the length of the leave. The third column indicates the salary to be paid to the faculty member during the academic year in which a leave is taken. If a leave of one quarter is taken, there is no reduction in salary. If a leave of two quarters is taken, the faculty member's yearly salary is reduced by the amount it takes to pay for one course funded on a fee-for-service basis. If three quarters of leave are taken, the yearly salary is reduced by the amount needed to fund three fee-for-service courses. In order not to introduce inequities between senior and junior faculty, the cost of a fee-for-service course is expressed as a percentage of each faculty members' salary:

Faculty members who take two or three quarters of paid leave will have their salary reduced by the amount it costs to pay for the indicated number of courses. In order not to introduce inequities between senior and junior faculty, this will be expressed as a percentage of each faculty member's salary.

Quarters of Paid Leave	Reduction in Teaching Load	Salary reduced by payment for fee-for-service courses*
1	1/3	0
2	2/3	1 course
3	100%	3 courses

\*Note: "Cost of course" =

$$\frac{\text{(Mean cost of fee-for-service course)}}{\text{(Mean salary of tenure-line faculty)}} \times \text{(faculty member's salary)}$$

Note that as of DATE the SESP Dean has consistently waived the requirement for faculty salary reductions to cover courses foregone during LOA. As this element of the leave policy is approved and enacted by vote of the full faculty, it remains in effect and may be implemented at the dean's discretion. In the event this clause is to be reactivated, it will be applied consistently to all faculty effective the reinstatement date and those affected will be notified during the leave request review process.