



Establishing a Rubric for Sabbatical Applications

RES 252608

FAC

- RESOLVED:** The Academic Senate approves revisions to the University Handbook regarding Sabbatical Leave Applications. Deletions are in ~~strikethrough~~, and additions are in **bold and underlined**.
- RESOLVED:** The Office of the Provost and Office of Faculty Affairs will ensure that sabbatical application materials are made available at least 30 days prior to the application deadline for sabbatical leave and difference-in-pay leave.
- RESOLVED:** Application materials shall include the Faculty Information Bulletin, Application Cover Form/Routing Sheet, Procedures for Preparation of the Application, Sabbatical Report Cover Sheet, and Rubric (Appendix A).
- RESOLVED:** A list of eligible faculty and their sabbatical award history, list of sabbatical and difference-in-pay leave awards, and sabbatical leave financial form shall also be made available on the Faculty Affairs webpage.
- RESOLVED:** The attached rubric (Appendix A) shall be available on the Faculty Affairs webpage and used to determine sabbatical awards. Future modifications to the rubric shall require Academic Senate resolution.
- RESOLVED:** The AVP for Faculty Affairs (or designee) shall work with the Faculty Honors and Awards Committee to keep application materials current and facilitate sabbatical review.

307.2 Procedures for Preparation of Sabbatical Leave Application

The applicant shall inform his/her **their** chair and ~~school~~-**college** dean of the application for sabbatical leave and the proposed dates of absence. The application for sabbatical leave shall be evaluated by the Honors and Awards Committee (FHAC) in accordance with the established criteria and must contain the following information:

- a. Proposed Project
 1. The proposed project shall be one or both of the following **categories. These categories shall be considered equally:**
 - a) A project of high quality and importance. This includes, but is not limited to, original research, a creative project, or the development of new academic skills;

- b) A study or travel of a kind and in an amount that will improve and update the applicant's professional capabilities. If the emphasis is a study, it must be related to the University's curriculum or to the applicant's professional development.
- 2. A clear and detailed explanation of the proposed project, including the nature, scope, and means of implementation.
- 3. The inclusive dates requested for the leave and, where appropriate, a timetable for the implementation of the proposal.
- 4. If relevant to project completion, the location(s) where the project will be conducted. If travel is part of the plan, its usefulness and necessity must be clearly presented.
- b. Professional Productivity and Preparation
 - 1. A current vita containing evidence, where appropriate, of relevant education or research in the field of the proposed project, publications, or other professional accomplishments in the field of specialization.
 - 2. Where appropriate, what preparatory work has been completed specifically for this project, such as background reading, development of techniques, personal contacts, and tentative facility arrangements.
- c. Benefits to the University (in at least one of the following):
 - 1. The tangible results to be expected from the project. These may be in the form of publication, creative presentations, participation in seminars, conferences, program or curricular development.
 - 2. Benefits of the proposed project to the applicant as a teacher and benefits to students.

307.3 The Role of the Faculty Honors and Awards Committee (FHAC)

The FHAC shall review all sabbatical leave proposals and make recommendations regarding the awarding of leaves to the P&VPAA.

The proposal shall involve one or more of the following: scholarly research, scholarly and creative activity, instructional improvement, or faculty retraining.

They shall consider the potential relevance of the proposal and the subsequent service of the faculty member at this University relative to institutional and departmental mission, goals, and obligations. Among the factors which may be considered are professional development and renewal, improvement of teaching skills, development of a new academic program, and enhancement of the reputation of the University which may result from the leave.

The FHAC shall evaluate the proposals using a two-step process: (1) distinguish meritorious from non-meritorious proposals. Those deemed non-meritorious shall not be ranked, but will be returned to the proposer with comments for the possibility of revision and consideration for the following year; (2) rank all remaining proposals only on merit, allowing no ties. In addition to the assessment of project's merit, the FHAC will also assess the following:

- a. The proposed project shall be one for which the applicant has:
 - 1. Acquired professional capabilities adequate to the task;
 - 2. Completed preparation and planning to undertake the project.
- b. Results of the sabbatical shall benefit the University by one or more of the following:
 - 1. ~~Advanced~~ **Advancement of** scholarship by such means as publication, presentation at conferences or meetings, public performance or exhibition;
 - 2. Improving curriculum, developing new course(s) or program(s);
 - 3. Improving teaching **effectiveness**;
 - 4. Renewing professional skills.

307.3.1 Rubric for Sabbatical Leave Application and Feedback

The FHAC shall apply the approved rubric when evaluating applications.

307.3.2.1 Feedback on Sabbatical Leave Application

All applicants, whether meritorious or non-meritorious, shall receive structured written feedback based on the rubric above. Feedback shall identify the number of applicants and the number of awards for the application cycle. This feedback shall identify strengths of the proposal and areas for improvement. Applicants not awarded a sabbatical may revise and resubmit in a subsequent year, with the benefit of this feedback for proposal strengthening. Revision in response to feedback shall not be assumed to result in automatic award of sabbatical application.

RATIONALE:

Sabbatical leave is one of the most important mechanisms available to faculty for professional development, renewal, scholarly productivity, and the advancement of teaching and learning at the University. To ensure that proposals are evaluated fairly and consistently, it is essential that clear, transparent criteria guide the Faculty Honors and Awards Committee (FHAC). The development of a rubric provides a standardized framework for evaluation designed to promote equity and consistency across disciplines, and to strengthen the integrity of the review process.

Providing written feedback to applicants enhances faculty development by identifying strengths and areas for improvement. This process will encourage faculty to submit stronger proposals in future cycles, increase the quality and impact of sabbatical projects, and expand the benefits to the University. The proposed revisions are therefore designed to enhance transparency, fairness, and continuous improvement in sabbatical leave procedures, in alignment with the University's commitment to faculty excellence.

Distribution List:

President
Provost and VP for Academic Affairs
Academic Senate
Faculty Honors and Awards Committee
College Deans
Dean of the Library
College Associate Deans
General Faculty

Approved by the Academic Senate:

Sent to the President:

President Approved:

Appendix A: Rubric

The FHAC shall apply the following rubric when evaluating applications (approved by Academic Senate on XX/XX/XX):

Rubric for Evaluating Sabbatical Applications

Category: Proposed Project

Subcategory	Description	Exemplary	Proficient	Developing
1.1 Originality & Innovation	How creative, distinctive, or novel the project is in concept or approach.	41–50: Project presents a unique, innovative idea or approach; advances the field meaningfully.	21–40: Sound idea but moderately conventional or lacks clear innovation.	0–20: Little originality or creative merit; unclear purpose.
1.2 Methods & Design	Clarity, rigor, and appropriateness of the project's design, methods, or creative process.	41–50: Methods are well-defined, rigorous, and align logically with goals.	21–40: Methods partially developed or missing key details.	0–20: Methods vague, incomplete, or infeasible.
1.3 Feasibility & Scope	Realistic scale, timeline, and potential for completion within constraints.	21–25: Clear, realistic plan; timeline and resources fully support success.	11–20: Mostly feasible but scope or time may be optimistic.	0–10: Unclear or unrealistic scope; feasibility in question.
1.4 Contribution & Impact	The scholarly, creative, or applied significance of the project.	21–25: Clear, meaningful contribution to the field or broader community.	11–20: Moderate contribution or potential impact not well articulated.	0–10: Limited or unclear contribution.

Category: Professional Productivity and Preparation

Subcategory	Description	Exemplary	Proficient	Developing
2.1 Prior Productivity	Evidence of previous scholarly, creative, or professional output.	33–40: Strong, consistent record of high-quality work (publications, performances, grants, etc.).	16–32: Some relevant productivity; output inconsistent or moderate.	0–15: Minimal record of productivity or engagement.
2.2 Preparatory Work	Steps taken to lay the groundwork for the proposed project.	25–30: Substantial preparatory work completed; shows readiness and planning.	15–24: Some preparatory effort evident but with gaps.	0–14: Little or no preparatory work evident.
2.3 Skills & Competencies	Applicant's background, experience, and expertise relevant to the project.	13–15: Clearly possesses all necessary skills and experience.	8–12: Adequate skills; may need additional training or support.	0–7: Lacks key competencies or background.
2.4 Career Development Potential	Likelihood that the project will enhance the applicant's career trajectory.	13–15: Project strongly supports professional growth and future advancement.	8–12: Some potential for development; link to long-term goals not fully clear.	0–7: Minimal or unclear connection to professional advancement.

Category: Benefits to the University

Subcategory	Description	Exemplary	Proficient	Developing
3.1 Benefits to Students	Impact on student learning, mentorship, or research engagement.	41–50: Clear, substantial, and measurable student benefits.	21–40: Some student benefits described; modest scope or clarity.	0–20: Minimal or unclear student impact.
3.2 Benefits to Curriculum or Teaching	Integration of project outcomes into courses, pedagogy, or academic programs.	33–40: Strong plan to enhance teaching or curriculum with project results.	16–32: Some potential integration; limited detail or scope.	0–15: No clear teaching or curricular benefit.
3.3 Benefits to Scholarship or Reputation	Advancement of the university's academic or public reputation.	33–40: Likely to elevate university profile through publications, presentations, or partnerships.	16–32: Some potential for visibility or recognition.	0–15: No clear link to university reputation.
3.4 Alignment with Institutional Mission or Priorities	Consistency with the university's strategic goals (e.g., sustainability, justice, innovation, diversity).	17–20: Clearly aligned with institutional priorities; demonstrates shared values.	9–16: Partial or indirect alignment.	0–8: No apparent alignment.

Tiebreaking Procedures

In the event of a **tie in total points**, awards will be prioritized according to the following tiebreakers, in order:

1. **Seniority:** Greater number of years since the applicant's last sabbatical award (or since hire, if no sabbatical has been previously taken).
2. **University Impact:** Higher combined score in *Category 3 — Benefits to the University*.
3. **Professional Productivity:** Higher combined score in *Category 2 — Professional Productivity & Preparation*.
4. **Committee Deliberation:** If a tie remains after applying the above criteria, the Sabbatical Review Committee may consider qualitative distinctions and make a final recommendation by consensus vote.