HRM-038 Faculty Leaves

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Oversight Executive
Executive Vice President and Provost

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Reason for Policy

Recognizing the need for faculty members (including academic, administrative, and professional) to be away from the University to pursue research and scholarship and to take time away from work to fulfill family, personal, or other outside obligations, the University has established different types of leave.

Definition of Terms

Contractual Period

Description

The period of time, usually identified in the appointment letter, when a faculty member is engaged in business for the University. For example, the 9-month academic year for faculty with 9-month appointments and the percentage of FTE for part-time faculty.

Leave With Partial Pay

Description

Approved temporary reduction of a faculty member's workload accompanied by a commensurate reduction in salary. For example, a faculty member whose position is usually at a Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) of 1.0 is approved for half-time Leave with Partial Pay reduces their FTE to 0.5, retains approximately half of their regular responsibilities, and receives 50% of their salary. The availability of benefits during a Leave with Partial Pay depends on the type of leave and FTE.

Leave Without Pay

Description

Approved absence from the University during which a faculty member does not receive salary; availability of benefits during a Leave Without Pay depends on the type of leave.

Leave Year

Description

For the purposes of tracking unpaid leave taken by faculty members under the federal government's Family and Medical Leave Act, the leave year begins each year on the first day of the pay period that includes January 1. Otherwise, faculty leave periods that reset annually (i.e., Annual Leave) do so at the start of each fiscal year on July 1.

Sabbatical

Description

A period of time in which a faculty member may focus solely on research, study, or other scholarly activities without teaching, clinical, service, or administrative responsibilities, usually awarded on a competitive basis.

Policy Statement

The University provides different types of leave to support a faculty member's professional and personal life.

In most cases, faculty members must submit a request for any type of leave to their supervisor and obtain the required approvals as noted herein. A leave request will be considered in light of the faculty member's particular situation and the needs of the faculty member's department or unit. School and academic unit leaders are obligated to ensure that mission and operational needs are fulfilled. For discretionary leave types only, they may deny, modify, or negotiate the timing or duration of a leave request when necessary to maintain essential

academic functions.

Faculty members are responsible for meeting the performance expectations of their roles, and so long as they remain employed are subject to University policies. Approved leave, on its own, does not typically alter long-term performance standards or expectations, nor does it alter a faculty member's obligation to abide by University and unit policies. Any adjustments to performance expectations resulting from leave will be determined through good-faith dialogue between the faculty member and their supervisor, and, once agreed upon, documented and approved by both parties.

A leave of absence, whether full or partial, will not be granted for longer than two consecutive years, except under extraordinary circumstances (see Procedures).

As noted herein, some types of leave must be taken without pay. Other types may be taken on a partial basis, with the faculty member continuing to work some percentage of time for reduced salary. Only a few types of leave may be taken without a reduction in salary (see each section below for details).

Requests for Leave with Partial Pay that reduce a faculty member's effort to less than 25% must be endorsed in writing by the faculty member's supervisor, and approved in writing by both the appropriate dean/vice president (or their delegate), and the appropriate executive vice president or the president based on the determination that the leave is in the best interests of the University. Executive vice presidents and the president may delegate this approval authority.

If a faculty member's employment ends during a period of approved leave, the leave and any benefits associated with the leave will not continue beyond the faculty member's last date of employment. The granting of leave alone does not extend an individual's employment with the University.

For Tenure-Line faculty members, the duration of a leave counts within the tenure probationary period unless the leave is associated with an extension to the probationary period in accordance with PROV-017: Employment of Tenure-line Faculty.

Certain benefits may be affected when an employee takes leave. Faculty members considering a leave of any kind are encouraged to consult with a benefits counselor in University Human Resources (UVA HR) as soon as possible when considering leave. Clinical faculty members are encouraged to consult with benefits counselors in both UVA HR and UVA Physicians Group.

A faculty member on leave with full pay retains full-time benefits. A faculty member on Leave with Partial Pay usually retains full-time benefits, including health insurance. However, any reduction in compensation may result in a corresponding decrease in the value of life insurance and disability benefits, as well as the employer's retirement contribution. Individuals receiving some level of compensation usually remain eligible for these benefits, but the coverage and contributions are reduced based on actual compensation. For most types of Leave with Partial Pay, the faculty member's reduced salary must be sufficient to allow for deduction of the employee's share of the health insurance premium to maintain health insurance.

Faculty members on Leave Without Pay or with effort below 25% may retain health, vision, and dental insurance coverage under specific circumstances. In such cases, the responsibility for the cost varies: the individual may be billed for their portion of the premium, both their portion and the University's portion, or, in rare cases, the University may cover both.

The terms of an approved leave must be documented, usually prior to the start of the leave, in a letter to the faculty member from the dean or vice president (or their delegate) with provision for the faculty member's signature to acknowledge and accept said terms. Any changes to these terms must be documented and approved

by the dean or appropriate vice president (or their delegate). For sick days and Annual Leave, an exchange of emails is usually sufficient.

Any school or unit faculty leave and/or modified duties policy, regardless of whether it differs from or adds to the terms of this policy, must be approved in writing by the provost before it becomes effective. As noted below, each school must have a modified duties policy or incorporate Modified Duties into their overarching leave policy.

1. **Annual Leave and Holidays:**
   Full-time faculty members on 12-month appointments are eligible for 24 days of Annual Leave per year. Annual leave time is pro-rated in alignment with a faculty member's Contractual Period and effort. For example, a full-time faculty member on a 9-month contract is eligible for 18 days of Annual Leave, whereas a faculty member employed on a half-time basis for nine months would only be eligible for nine days of Annual Leave.

   Any unused Annual Leave lapses at the end of each fiscal year and may not be accumulated. There is no compensation made for any unused leave at the end of the year, nor if and when a faculty member leaves the University, nor if and when they convert to a different employment classification or unit.

   Academic Units are responsible for monitoring Annual Leave for their faculty.

   Annual Leave may be used for any purpose, including the extension of other periods of leave, and should be managed between the employee and their supervisor in accordance with school and/or unit policy and practice. Faculty members are expected to proactively communicate with their supervisor regarding planned absences to ensure continuity of their responsibilities. Faculty members are generally prohibited from taking Annual Leave on the days and during times that they are scheduled to teach, in alignment with PROV-008: Teaching Courses for Academic Credit.

   University Academic Division holidays, as published by UVA HR, are scheduled so as to limit disruption to the academic calendar. These holidays are not counted against Annual Leave. All faculty members who are required to work on an official Academic Division holiday are entitled to compensatory time off work approximately equivalent to the hours worked. The specific scheduling of such time is subject to the approval of their supervisor and operational needs.

2. **Leave for Professional Reasons:**
   In all cases of Professional Leave, faculty members must submit leave requests in writing as far in advance of the anticipated absence as reasonably possible. These leave requests must be reviewed and approved by both the faculty member's direct supervisor (e.g. department chair or supervisor) and the appropriate dean; or for non-school/non-library faculty members the appropriate vice president. Deans and vice presidents may delegate this approval authority, provided that such delegation is made to an individual who holds a supervisory role at a level above the faculty member's direct supervisor.

   If a faculty member begins employment elsewhere during or within one calendar year of returning from a paid leave for professional reasons, they shall remit to the University any salary and associated benefits paid by the University during the leave. This information should be included in the letter documenting the approval of the leave.

   Faculty members approved to take a Professional Leave that reduces their effort below 25% retain their health, vision, and dental insurance coverage so long as they pay the employee portion of their premiums.

Leave for professional reasons may be approved as Leave with Pay, Leave Without Pay, or Leave with Partial Pay for up to two years. During such leave, faculty members are expected to remain engaged in scholarly, educational, or other professional activities that advance the mission of the institution. As such, paid leave is typically appropriate unless the faculty member is receiving other compensation for the work performed during the leave period.

Schools should establish clear, standard expectations for faculty members on professional leave. These standards should include approved activities, responsibilities to the University, compensation, and post-leave reporting requirements. These expectations should also specify the obligation to inform the supervisor of, and/or obtain approval for, any activities that differ from those originally approved. All expectations, along with any agreed-upon deviations, should be communicated to the faculty member in a clear and timely manner, prior to the beginning of any leave period.

A. **Sabbaticals:**
Sabbaticals may be offered on a limited basis to help faculty invigorate their research and teaching activities. Each school offering a sabbatical program shall maintain a written policy explaining the elements of its program, including the conditions of eligibility, the criteria and mechanism of selection, the application procedure, the annual schedule of decision-making, reporting requirements, and provisions, if any, for deferring the sabbatical leave.

In addition, sabbatical may be approved for full-time Tenure-Line Faculty members. and Academic General Faculty members, usually to recognize individuals who have contributed significantly to academic administration, have been appointed to an endowed professorship, or who have offered extraordinary service to the University at the department/unit, school, or institutional level.

B. **Other Professional Leave:**
Other Professional leave, which was historically referred to as Educational Leave, offers faculty members the opportunity to pursue new knowledge, techniques, and experiences that are judged by the faculty member's supervisor and dean or vice president to benefit the department (or academic unit) and/or facilitate or enhance the faculty member's ability to contribute to the University. Such experiences may include, but are not limited to, unique training opportunities, visiting faculty appointments at other institutions, and non-profit and non-governmental engagements. Faculty members who receive external awards or fellowships that include financial support may request Other Professional leave for the period of the award or fellowship.

3. **Leave for Personal Reasons:**
In addition to the unpaid leave provided by the federal Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA), individuals who hold salaried faculty appointments of one academic year or more may be eligible for personal leave as outlined below.

For complete details regarding unpaid leave that may be awarded under FMLA, see policy HRM-026: Family and Medical Leave. For details regarding procedures related to FMLA and request forms, see UVA HR's Guidelines for Requesting Family, Medical, or Military Leave.

Unpaid leave approved for faculty members under FMLA runs concurrent with other paid and unpaid leave described in this policy, including but not limited to, Family Leave, Parental Leave, and Medical Leave.

In all cases of Personal Leave, faculty members must submit leave requests in writing as far in advance of the anticipated absence as reasonably possible. These leave requests must be reviewed and approved by both the faculty member's direct supervisor (e.g. department chair or supervisor) and the appropriate dean or, for non-school/non-library faculty members and those faculty who report directly to a dean, the appropriate vice president. Deans and vice presidents may delegate this approval authority, provided that such delegation is made to an individual who holds a supervisory role at a level above the faculty member's direct supervisor. Such approval is not guaranteed. However, school and unit leadership must make every effort to accommodate faculty members' leave preference while also providing for the continuity of their operations.

Faculty members approved to take personal leave below 25% effort retain their health, vision, and dental insurance coverage so long as they pay both the employer and the employee portion of their premiums.

A. **Parental:**
   A faculty member may request up to eight weeks of leave with full pay, or 16 weeks of leave at half-pay upon a qualifying parental leave event, either through the birth, adoption, or placement of a child, or the assumption of legal guardianship for a child under 18 years of age. When parental leave is taken as 16 weeks at half pay, the faculty member is on full leave and will receive 50% of their regular institutional base salary during this period.

   No more than two faculty members may be approved for parental leave related to the same qualifying parental leave event.

   A faculty member who is taking paid parental leave may also request an additional four weeks of unpaid parental leave. During the four weeks of unpaid parental leave, the University will pay no salary but will contribute the employer's portion of any allowable health and life insurance premiums, so long as the faculty member continues to pay the employee's share of the premium. During these four weeks, the University will not make contributions to the faculty member's retirement benefit plan.

   Parental leave must be completed within 12 months of the date of the birth or placement of the child. Faculty members may request to use this leave on an intermittent (non-sequential) basis during this 12-month period.

   If the parents of a child (birth, adoptive, foster, or legal guardian) are faculty members working in the same department, unit, or program, the faculty members may be required by their school or unit to stagger or otherwise coordinate their periods of paid and unpaid parental leave so as to minimize the disruptive effect of leave on the department or unit.

   For faculty members who give birth, any approved paid parental leave is in addition to paid leave received as a result of short-term disability.

B. **Family:**
   Faculty members are eligible for Leave with Partial Pay or without pay for up to one year when circumstances in their family make it difficult for them to carry out assigned duties. Family leave may be approved to allow the faculty member to serve temporarily as the primary caretaker of their child, or grandchild (regardless of age or disability); or their spouse, or another disabled or elderly adult.

C. **Other Personal Reasons:**
A faculty member may request leave for personal reasons other than those specified above. These reasons may include but are not limited to bereavement, personal life events, crisis, and religious or cultural observances.

Other Personal leave may be granted as Leave with Partial Pay or without pay for up to two years.

4. **Medical Leave:**
   A. **Sick Days:**
   A faculty member may take up to 12 days of paid sick leave each year due to their own illness, injury, or medical appointments, or to care for an immediate family member who is ill, injured, or requires medical attention. This leave should be managed between the employee and their supervisor.

   B. **Disability Benefits (Medical Leave):**
   The types of disability benefits available to faculty members are determined by the faculty member's retirement plan (Virginia Retirement System or Optional Retirement Plan). Short-term disability is generally described as a type of "sick" leave for absences of more than five consecutive days, including leave for the birth of a child. Days off work as a result of personal illness or injury that do not meet the conditions of short-term disability should be managed as sick days (see above).

   For more information about the disability programs associated with each plan, visit UVA Human Resources disability benefits information page.

5. **Public Service Leave:**
   A. **Intergovernmental Service:**
   Intergovernmental Service, sometimes also referred to as an exchange, may be granted only through formal cooperative agreements or contracts. The length and terms of Intergovernmental Service Leave are determined by the negotiated contract. Such leave is not guaranteed and should be approved only when the faculty member's supervisor and the relevant dean or vice president determine that the arrangement will support or advance the faculty member's contributions to the University's mission. During this leave, the faculty member provides professional services to another governmental entity, at the local, state, or federal level.

   B. **Military Duty:**
   Faculty members called to military duty will be placed on Leave with Pay for a limited number of days in accordance with state law, after which they may choose to use Annual Leave prior to being placed on Leave Without Pay.

   Although University health insurance is not available for faculty members on Leave Without Pay for military duty, the faculty member and their dependents can enroll in COBRA continuation coverage for up to 24 months. If the faculty member is called to active service, the University will pay the employer contribution toward COBRA continuation coverage and the usual COBRA administrative fee will be waived. Employer-provided life and disability insurance will be continued for 24 months of unpaid military leave.

All faculty members called to military duty should consult with UVA HR regarding their rights under the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 (USERRA).

C. **Jury Duty:**
If a faculty member is selected to serve on a federal jury, the federal government will pay them for their services at the rate established for federal jury service. Faculty members may either keep the federal payment and take unpaid leave, or remit the payment back to the University (see Procedures below) and take Paid Leave. Money received from the government for non-federal jury duty is considered "reimbursement for expense." Faculty members take this as paid leave and have no obligation to remit these funds back to the University.

6. **Leave for Other Reasons:**
   A. **Administrative:**
   A dean or vice president, in consultation with the provost, or the provost, may place a faculty member on immediate paid administrative leave during an investigation of alleged misconduct when it is determined that this action is justified to safeguard the University community or its operations from harm or disruption. The dean (or delegate) must inform the faculty member of the specific alleged behavior resulting in the need for administrative leave to the extent allowed by policy and/or law. Decisions about administrative leave and faculty activities may be reevaluated throughout the investigative process as additional information becomes available.

   B. **Administrative Emergency Leave:**
   The university president may authorize administrative emergency leave to ensure continuity of operations due to unexpected or extraordinary circumstances, such as those arising out of a communicable disease outbreak. This leave is typically paid leave, regardless of fund source, and such leave is available only during periods authorized by the university president.

7. **Modified Duties:**
In association with and in addition to a period of leave, a dean/vice president or their delegate may modify a faculty member's duties during working periods within the same semester in which that faculty member takes leave. During the period of modified duties, the leadership will typically relieve the faculty member from organized teaching and service responsibilities. For faculty members with significant direct clinical responsibilities or limited teaching obligations, other modifications should be provided appropriate to their circumstances.

Modified duties are not a reduction in effort. During the period of modified duties, the faculty member is expected to fulfill their professional responsibilities at 100% effort. This includes those responsibilities for which the faculty member is uniquely qualified and which may not be delegated, such as writing and reviewing papers, submitting proposals, and advising graduate students.

School and unit leadership should make every effort to ensure that faculty members approved for modified duties will not be responsible for finding replacements for courses they normally teach, nor required to subsequently compensate for teaching releases granted as part of their modified duties. Faculty will be expected to cooperate with the school and unit leadership to identify ways to meet mission central needs.

Each school is required to either publish a school-specific modified duties policy or incorporate Modified Duties into their overarching leave policy. In either case, such policies must be approved by the provost and must conform to the general requirements set forth in this policy and, where appropriate, provide greater specificity, consistent with the school's particular needs and structure.

8. **Compliance with Policy:**
   Failure to comply with the requirements of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination in accordance with relevant University policies.

   Direct questions about this policy to the Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost.

Procedures

For Faculty:

- Faculty members considering a request for any type of leave and/or modified duties should consult with their supervisor and UVA HR as soon as reasonably possible. Clinical faculty members are encouraged to also consult with the University Physicians Group.
- Faculty members who require an extension to, or any modification of the approved terms and conditions of a leave, must submit a request as soon as possible to their supervisor, detailing the extenuating circumstances and specifying the term of additional leave being requested. If the supervisor and the dean or vice president recommend approval of the changes, they will forward it in writing to the appropriate executive vice president or the president, who will grant approval in writing if they determine that the changes are in the best interests of the University.
- Faculty members who believe they may be eligible for FMLA leave should submit their request to UVA HR; UVA HR will notify the dean's office or the appropriate vice president's office once the leave is approved.
- Faculty members who have served on a federal jury and wish to remit the payment for their service to the University (so as to avoid using Annual Leave for time served on the jury) should endorse the check and submit it to Payroll Services in UVA Finance.

For Schools and Units:

- Schools wishing to extend a period of leave beyond twenty-four months or award Leave with Partial Pay that is less than 25% of the faculty member's full pay should send a written request and brief justification to the associate provost for academic administration. Appropriate justifications include awarding partial Leave with Pay to allow a faculty member to accept an external fellowship that will fund most but not all their salary. Requests should be submitted to the Provost's Office at least 30 days prior to the start of the requested leave.

Related Information

HRM-026: Family and Medical Leave (University policy that applies to all University employees, including faculty, and contains information about the Family Medical Leave Act FMLA)
HRM-036: Use of Disaster Leave
PROV-009: Faculty Holding Appointments at Other Institutions or Organizations
PROV-017: Employment of Tenure-line Faculty (see Section II. Promotion and Tenure, specifically, Section A. The Probationary Period on the Tenure Track for information regarding requests to extend the probationary period)
HRM-011: Campaigning for and Serving in a Public Office (see Section 1. Faculty Responsibilities for allowances related to personal leave for the purpose of political activities)
Guidelines for Requesting Family, Medical, or Military Leave
Short-Term Disability
Virginia Retirement System
Optional Retirement Plan

Major Category Human Resource Management

Next Scheduled Review Friday, February 16, 2029

Revision History

Updated language, reorganized and renamed some leave categories, modified annual and sick leave 2/16/2026; Added Compliance section 7/21/21; Updated Section 2.C 6/17/20; Added #3E 4/14/20; Updated links 4/17/19; Revised 1/9/19; Updated links 1/29/18; 1/4/17; 7/16/14.

Category Cross Reference
Executive Vice President & Provost Policies

Supercedes Policy Text Faculty Leaves of Absence; Leave with Partial Pay (Benefits While on Leave).

Approved By Policy Review Committee

Approved Date Friday, September 13, 2013