

PROCEDURES and GUIDELINES for SCHOLARLY LEAVE

The College of Humanities and Sciences recognizes the importance of scholarly leave to the professional growth and development of our faculty and their teaching and research. Leave is designed to help faculty invigorate their research and teaching activities, and faculty requesting leave should have compelling and specific reasons for their request.

Description of Leave Types

Faculty are eligible for two types of scholarly leave: *Study-Research Leave* and *Educational Leave*. Study-Research leave is designed for tenured faculty who need a sustained period of dedicated time to make significant progress on a research project. Educational leave is designed for full-time faculty who wish to pursue a specific course of study relevant to their teaching or research. The College of Humanities and Sciences complies with the University/State policies and procedures for Study-Research and Educational leaves of absence which can be found on the University's HR website (<http://www.hr.vcu.edu/about/policies.html>).

Eligibility

To be eligible for **Study-Research Leave**, faculty must be **tenured**, have **six years** of prior University service, and have completed six years of service since a previous study-research leave.

To be eligible for **Educational Leave**, faculty must be **full-time**, have been employed by the University for at least one year, and have been accepted into an approved course of study at an accredited institution of higher learning, or have an approved plan outlined for independent study.

The College's guidelines conform to the University's policies which permit eligible faculty members, based on merit, to qualify for study-research or educational leave. The awarding of leave is subject to the availability of funds and the ability of the department or school to meet its teaching and other requirements.

Request Process

To request leave for the **2015-2016 academic year**, the faculty member must email the materials listed below to the Dean's Office (aabaski@vcu.edu) by **Monday, November 10, 2014**. The faculty member's Chair/Director must be copied on this email.

1. **Request for Scholarly Leave form** (attached and P:\Documents\H&S Forms\Scholarly Leave). The Chair/Director must indicate in **Section B** whether this request is supported (see details below).
Section B: The Chair/Director must review the scholarly leave request to determine if the faculty member is eligible for the leave, and whether the proposed leave activity is of value to the faculty member, the Dept./School, and the University. In evaluating the request, the Chair/Director should also consider the effect the faculty member's absence will have on the Dept./School. If the request is endorsed, then the Chair/Director should indicate how the faculty member's courses and other responsibilities, e.g., advising, administrative activities, etc., will be covered at minimal cost to the College. If the Chair/Director does not endorse the request, then he/she should briefly explain why. After completing section B, the Chair/Director should save the document as a PDF file and then send it back to the faculty member.
2. **Narrative** that describes the following: (typically a few pages, single-spaced)
 - Summary of the proposed leave activity;
 - Description of the scholarly project (for study-research leave) or educational objective (for educational leave). This narrative should include specific goals, timeline, etc.
 - Relevance of the proposed leave activity to faculty member, Department/School, and University.
3. **Current CV**

Review Process for Scholarly Leave

The Dean will review the merits of all requests for scholarly leave, regardless whether they are supported by the respective Chair/Director. The Dean will appoint a faculty advisory committee comprising former leave recipients and associate deans to review and rank the requests and to make a recommendation. The Committee will evaluate each proposal's merit in terms of the significance of the work proposed, the relationship to teaching and ongoing scholarly productivity, and the connection with the mission of the Department/School and College.

The Dean will review the list of recommendations and make a final determination. Faculty members will be notified in writing of the Dean's decision and if the leave is approved by the Dean, then the Dean will seek approval from the Provost.

If the Provost approves the leave, then the faculty member and respective Chair/Director will be notified by the Dean. The faculty member will be issued a *Leave Agreement and Promissory Note* (<http://www.hr.vcu.edu/about/policies.html>), as well as a new employment contract reflecting the terms of the leave.

Terms

Eligible faculty may apply for a scholarly leave for one semester at full pay, two semesters at half pay, or up to two semesters at no pay. Faculty must sign a *Study-Research/Educational Leave and Promissory Note* agreeing to return to the University and serve a period of employment equal to twice the period of leave. If the return-to-work commitment is not honored, then the faculty member must reimburse the University for the salary received during the leave period, plus interest, regardless of the source of funds (e.g., E&G, grants, external, etc.). In addition, the faculty member must submit a written report to the Dean's office (aabaski@vcu.edu) after their return from leave. In lieu of a written report, a paper or a grant proposal is acceptable.