

Leave Policy

Policy and Procedures on Faculty Leaves

College of Visual and Performing Arts

Research leaves are an investment by the University and College in the faculty. By University policy, research leaves are granted for the purpose of facilitating scholarly research, study, or other creative activity. Faculty members holding tenured appointments in the College of Visual and Performing Arts (VPA) of Syracuse University are eligible for paid research leave with salary and benefits after a minimum of twelve academic-year semesters of regular teaching, research, and service since the last research leave or since the start of employment. Any application for a funded leave before twelve semesters must describe the special circumstances that justify an exception to these norms. After **two** years of service, a tenure-track faculty member is eligible to apply for a one-semester paid research leave with salary and benefits; pre-tenure research leaves normally occur during the third or fourth year of employment. In this circumstance, like tenured faculty, tenure-track faculty must apply through the VPA Research Leave process described here. Tenure-track faculty members who receive a pre-tenure research leave should be aware that they will next be eligible for a research leave after twelve semesters of regular teaching, research, and service following the pre-tenure leave. For tenure-track faculty undergoing a third-year review, approval of a research leave in the following year is contingent upon a successful third-year review.

A second semester of research leave immediately following the first semester of leave will require non-tenured and tenured faculty members to seek the approval of the department/school and college, and to fund their salary for the second semester of leave through external sources. If external funds do not cover fully the faculty member's salary for the second semester of leave, then all faculty should be aware that they are requesting a second semester of partially paid research leave and that they should discuss their options with the dean's office.

Within VPA, faculty members who desire research leaves should first consult with their department/school chair/director. The chairs/directors balance the teaching needs of the department against the number of research leaves, faculty buyouts, faculty vacancies, upcoming administrative leaves, and contractual release time for non-tenured faculty members that in the aggregate may impinge on the delivery of undergraduate and graduate curricula; other financial implications will be considered as well, and plans should strive for budget-neutral implementation as much as possible. Additional factors for the approval of leave requests include the merit of the proposed project and the likelihood of significant progress during the leave. The chairs/directors should consult with the dean's office before making final decisions on leave priorities.

Once the applications have been processed and acted upon within the department, they are submitted to the VPA dean's office.

The dean's office reviews recommendations from departments and schools, and in most cases endorses the recommendations and forwards them to the Vice Chancellor for a final decision. The Vice Chancellor's Office will issue a letter to the faculty member about the terms of their leave. When the dean denies the leave, the dean will explain to the relevant department/school chair/director the reason that the application was denied.

Applications should be made sufficiently in advance to allow processing and to enable convenient rearrangement of the teaching and research programs. Ordinarily, applications for research leave for fall semester of the next academic year – or for the entirety of the next academic year – should reach the VPA dean's office by early October of the current academic year and by early February for spring semester leaves to begin the following January. (The exact deadlines vary somewhat each year and are published at the beginning of each academic year by VPA's Office of Academic Affairs.) Leave recommendations are forwarded to the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs by November 15 and March 15, respectively, and are presented to the Board of Trustees for final approval.

Administrative Leaves

Administrative leaves may be granted for a variety of purposes, including government service and/or after significant administrative service within VPA. Administrative leave is granted through the VPA dean and University officers.

Other Leaves

Syracuse University grants leaves for personal circumstances. These are governed by personnel policies and are beyond the scope of research leaves. Faculty should consult with the Office of Human Resources and/or department/school chairs/directors and the college dean about personnel policies.

University Policy on Leaves of Absence (Excerpts from the Faculty Manual, Section 2.55)

Deans will carefully weigh the contributions that leaves will make to the professional effectiveness and personal well-being of faculty members as well as the best interests of the University. Recommendation will be based on the estimated value and relative urgency of the leave, the length of time since the previous leave, the duration of the leave, and the disruption of teaching and other professional commitments. In reviewing the recommendations, the Vice Chancellor and Provost will also consider an equitable distribution of leaves in a given year throughout all of the University faculties. The number of persons granted leave in any one year will not exceed a reasonable percent of the entire University faculties and may be limited at the discretion of the Vice Chancellor and Provost and the Chancellor.

Most leaves will be for the duration of a semester or an academic year. Initial requests should state whether a leave of two academic years is contemplated. Extensions of leaves will not ordinarily exceed one year in addition to leave already held.

Leaves of absence will be scheduled within each department so that the teaching load of the person on leave may properly be carried on, or some or all of the courses normally scheduled for the person seeking leave may be omitted without detriment to the instructional program and the students for whom they are offered.

Faculty members who have served the University for several years and who give unusual promise of using the leave to scholarly advantage, other than for completing work toward a higher degree, may be recommended for a one-semester research leave at full pay with benefits, or for an academic year's leave at half pay with benefits.

Leaves may be recommended and granted with or without salary and/or benefits. Faculty members on leave with pay may not accept other paid employment which would cause their income to exceed their Syracuse University base pay for a comparable period of time. They may, however, accept money from fellowships or grants for study, research, or travel without prejudice to their University salary so long as such acceptance carries no duties or obligations hindering the pursuit of the purpose for which the leave is granted and so long as those funds are used to meet research or study objectives and not to augment the salary of the faculty members on leave.

Faculty members on leave with pay will be paid semi-monthly. In the case of leaves abroad, it is possible, where necessary, to arrange for full or partial salary advances.

Time on leave

Whether leave time is counted toward tenure or time in grade for promotion purposes is governed in each case by the recommendation of the appropriate dean and the approval of the Vice Chancellor and Provost, the Chancellor, and the Board of Trustees. These leave decisions must be made and noted at the time the leave is granted.

Report on faculty leave

Within 30 days after return from a leave, faculty members must submit a report to their dean and the Vice Chancellor and Provost. These comprehensive reports should not detract from the importance of forwarding urgent and immediately useful information at once. Faculty members on leave assume an obligation to notify their dean promptly of any change of address.

Future service (revised 2/06)

Under normal circumstances, Syracuse University requires that a faculty member granted research leave, or another type of leave, with pay will return to full-time service to the University for the equivalent period following his/her leave. If this obligation is not fulfilled, the faculty member or his or her new employer must reimburse the University for the salary paid while on leave, unless specifically relieved of the obligation by the Vice Chancellor and Provost.

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