

Sabbatical Leave

Policy: SABBATICAL LEAVES

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Responsible Party: Office of the Provost

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1. SABBATICAL

A sabbatical assignment is a change of duties, that neither diminishes nor increases the extent of the person's employment with the university. The recipient remains employed by the university during the entire term of the sabbatical to the same extent employed while on regular assignment, regardless of the compensation agreed upon for the term of the sabbatical.

2. ELIGIBILITY

Any tenured faculty member who has seven or more years of service at Montana State University without a sabbatical shall be eligible for sabbatical assignment. **Service while on sabbatical shall be creditable service for all purposes to the same extent as a person's service while on regular assignment.**

Time spent on leave from Montana State University does not earn service time toward eligibility for sabbatical assignment. The seven years of service required for sabbatical assignment eligibility must be completed by the time the leave is started, not necessarily by the time the application is filed.

3. LIMITATIONS AND CONDITIONS

Sabbaticals are subject to the following limitations and conditions:

a. Sabbaticals are subject to budget limitations and cannot negatively impact the academic progress of students in the academic unit.

b. Satisfactory programs or projects for sabbatical periods include research, travel, related work in other institutions or private or business organizations, or other activities that the department head, dean, provost, and president agree will improve the staff member professionally, or that directly or indirectly benefit the campus and the state.

c. Sabbatical assignments shall normally be for a period of not less than one semester or more than an academic year for persons on academic year appointments and not less than one-half or more than one fiscal year for persons on fiscal year appointments; however, a person may request a shorter assignment.

d. Compensation from campus funds may not exceed 100% of the base salary for a semester sabbatical and 75% of the base salary for employees on an academic or fiscal year appointment. Special compensation arrangements involving funds from other than campus sources must be agreed upon and approved in keeping with the following conditions:

i. Compensation paid during a sabbatical assignment may differ from that paid for regular assignment because it may involve funding from sources other than regular campus funds such as fellowships, assistantships, or other sources of limited income including funds available from grants or contracts administered by the campus.

ii. All compensation must be received through the campus and no person may be additionally compensated for the time on sabbatical assignment by income from other employment during the same period, except in exceptional circumstances as approved in advance by the provost.

iii. Funds from other sources may be used to supplement campus funds to increase the compensation up to, but not in excess of, that amount which the individual could have earned during the same period.

iv. Compensation in excess of that which could have been earned on regular assignment may be approved by the provost only if all campus funds have been replaced by funds from other sources.

v. Programs or projects that necessarily involve employment by an employer other than the campus do not qualify for sabbatical assignment but may be approved as leave without pay.

A recipient of a sabbatical assignment will be expected to return to campus for a period equal to the length of the sabbatical assignment or to repay money received from the campus while on leave.

Persons on sabbatical assignment will continue to be eligible for employee benefits.

4. PROCEDURES

a. A reminder regarding sabbatical assignments shall be sent to faculty members from the provost no later than September 1 of each year. Applications for sabbatical assignment must be submitted to the provost by October 31 and shall include an endorsement from the department head and dean. The provost will forward all

applications to the Faculty Affairs Committee. The Faculty Affairs Committee will recommend a priority list for sabbatical assignments to the provost. The provost will make the final selection of faculty who receive sabbaticals, taking into account the quality of the proposal, the extent the sabbatical leave will impact any academic programs and the financial impact to the department granting the sabbatical. The department head and the dean letters will address the academic and financial impacts of the proposed sabbatical leave. Some academic units may not be able to support multiple sabbatical leaves at the same time.

b. Specific criteria for assigning priority rankings for sabbatical applications include Scholarly Merit and Integration, Planning and Organization, and Broader Impacts of the project. Additional credit is given to applicants based on years of service at MSU and academic rank. A detailed description of the criteria for review of applications for sabbatical assignment and their relative weights is listed in the "Application for Sabbatical Leave" available from the Office of the Provost.

c. The provost shall notify the faculty member of the final decision no later than March 1. For sabbatical assignment to be granted, an eligible faculty member must formally request assignment. The application for sabbatical assignment shall include the following:

- i. A definitive detailed plan for the scholarly or professional use of the sabbatical;
- ii. Anticipated future values of completion of the program for the applicant, for the students, for the department, and for the campus;
- iii. A complete vita including a record of all professional activities;
- iv. A listing of the specific whole semester(s) or portion of fiscal year for which assignment is requested;
- v. A description of any fellowship, grant or other arrangement that would aid in financing or otherwise supporting the proposed project;
- vi. The applicant's signed agreement to return to full-time service with Montana State University for a period equal to the length of the sabbatical following expiration of the assignment or to refund the compensation paid by the university during such assignment unless this obligation is specifically waived by the president; and
- vii. The faculty member applying for the sabbatical and their department head should identify the applicant's courses that would need coverage during their sabbatical and a plan to cover these courses.

d. The faculty member who is going on sabbatical assignment shall develop a clear written understanding with their department head or director describing what is expected of them while on sabbatical and upon the completion of their sabbatical assignment (e.g., manuscripts, progress reports). This plan will be approved by the dean and provost prior to approving the sabbatical.