

## COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND SCIENCES PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES FOR SCHOLARLY LEAVE

The College of Humanities and Sciences recognizes the importance of research and 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 kinds of scholarly leave: *Study-Research Leave* and *Educational Leave*. Study-Research leave is designed for faculty who need a sustained period of dedicated time to make significant progress on a project. Educational leave is designed for 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/policies>>.

### *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 Study Research Leave Policy which permits eligible faculty members, based on merit, to qualify for study-research leave. In addition to the stipulation regarding years of service between leaves, the policy also states that the awarding of such leave is "subject to the availability of funds and the ability of the department or school to meet its teaching and other requirements."

### *Request and Review Process*

To request leave, the faculty member must complete **Section A** of the College's **Request for Scholarly Leave** form and submit it to their respective Chair/Director (form is available on the College's "P" drive in the Documents, H&S forms file). The form must also be accompanied by a narrative which details at minimum:

- the proposed leave activity (including location)
- the nature of the project (methodology, scholarly context, anticipated significance)
- the specific goals and objectives (book MS, data set collection, etc)
- and the relevance of the proposed activity to faculty member, Department/School, and University.

The faculty member should also provide a current CV.

All leave requests must be submitted **by October 15 of the academic year preceding that in which the leave will be taken.**

2) 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 Department/School, and the University. In evaluating the request for leave, the Chair/Director should also consider the effect the faculty member's absence will have on the Department/School.

The Chair/Director should complete **Section B** of the request form indicating whether the leave requested is supported. If the leave request is endorsed, 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 or no additional cost to the College. If the Chair/Director does not support the leave request, he/she should provide a brief explanation as to why the leave request was not endorsed.

3) The Dean will review the merits of all requests for study-research leave, those supported, or not, by the respective Chairs/Directors. The Dean will appoint a standing faculty advisory committee to review and rank the requests for scholarly leave and make a recommendation. The Committee will submit to the Dean a ranked list of requests, and evaluation of each proposal, and a rationale for that rank. 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 the reason for that decision. If the leave is approved by the Dean, the Dean will seek the approval from the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs.

If the Provost approves the leave, that faculty member will be notified by the Dean. The Dean will notify the faculty member and respective Chair/Director of the decision. If approved, the faculty member will be issued a *Study-Research/Educational Leave Agreement and Promissory Note* < <http://www.hr.vcu.edu/policies>>. The faculty member will also be issued a new employment contract reflecting the terms of the study-research/educational 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, the faculty member must reimburse the University 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 Provost, Dean and Chair/Director within three months of their return from leave. In lieu of a written report, a paper or a grant proposal is acceptable.

