

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 complies with the university/state policies and procedures for study-research and educational leaves of absence, which can be found on the university's Human Resources Web site at 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

1. 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. This form is available on the College's "P" drive in the Documents, H&S forms file. The form must also be accompanied by a current CV and a narrative that details, at minimum:
 - The proposed leave activity (including location)
 - The nature of the project (methodology, scholarly context and anticipated significance)
 - The specific goals and objectives (book MS, data set collection, etc.)
 - The relevance of the proposed activity to faculty member, department/school and university

All leave requests must be submitted by Oct. 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.

