

CAS Leave Policy & Process

This document presents the various Leave of Absence options available to faculty in the College of Arts & Sciences. Research leave is an essential tool for faculty members to advance their scholarly agendas. The College encourages faculty members to pursue these opportunities, but requires faculty members and their departments to make appropriate arrangements to handle teaching and service assignments during the leave. To facilitate this, the College is adopting this policy in order to help departments and the College make appropriate plans for faculty Leaves of Absence.

1. TYPES OF LEAVE:

- a. [FACULTY DEVELOPMENT LEAVE \(FDL\)](#)

 - i. The College encourages all eligible faculty members to use the University's Faculty Development Leave program to fund periodic scholarly leaves.
 - ii. This program is described in the Faculty Handbook: Section 6.3.1, page 52.
 - iii. For planning purposes, it is important to be aware that the deadline for submission of FDL applications to the College is the first business day in October, a month before they are due to the Provost's Office.

- b. ZERO TEACHING ASSIGNMENT (ZTA)
 - i. The College defines a ZTA as a release from teaching responsibilities for one semester.
 - ii. A ZTA is provided to all tenure-track faculty in the College during their probationary period, during which the faculty member can more fully focus on their research for a semester prior to standing for promotion and tenure.
 - iii. The Head/Director must provide a letter of support for the zero-teaching semester detailing how curricular needs will be met and how student research supervision and service commitments will be satisfied.
 - iv. Course banking (see below) can be used to earn a ZTA.
- c. [FACULTY MODIFIED DUTIES ASSIGNMENT \(FMDA\)](#)

 - i. According to the Faculty Handbook (Section 6.4.2, p. 54): "certain nine-month faculty members may be eligible for certain additional benefits such as modifying service requirements and extending the tenure-track probationary status."
 - ii. FMDA: If warranted by serious faculty illness or by illness of a family member for whom a tenure track faculty member has primary care-giving responsibility, modifications in the faculty member's service, while maintaining full pay, may be requested by the faculty member and approved by his/her department head and dean who will forward their recommendation to the vice provost for faculty affairs for approval. Medical documentation must be submitted to the Office of Equity and Diversity.
 - iii. FMDA and the arrival of a child: Tenured and tenure-track faculty may modify their responsibilities for up to one semester at full pay while managing the arrival of a child through birth, adoption, or foster care.

- iv. Suspension of the tenure clock: A tenure-track faculty member who is granted a leave of absence or modified duties under the Family Care Policy (i.e., he/she has a serious illness or has primary responsibility for the care of an ill or disabled parent, spouse, or other family member) is eligible for a suspension of the tenure-track probationary period for up to one academic year upon agreement by the department head and dean.
- v. Extension of start-up expenditure duration can also be requested of both the Associate Dean for Research and Facilities, and the Office of Research & Engagement (ORE).
- d. [FAMILY and MEDICAL LEAVE \(FML\)](#)
 - i. According to the [Faculty Handbook](#) (Section 6.3.2, pp. 52-53): “12-month faculty members may use any or all accrued annual leave, or accrued sick leave if applicable, instead of taking leave without pay. This leave will be granted if it qualifies as family and medical leave on request by the employee or on determination by the university.”
 - ii. Applications for FML are to be approved by the Provost’s Office and Human Resources (medical documentation may be required).
- e. [EDUCATIONAL LEAVE OF ABSENCE](#) (WITH or WITHOUT PAY)
 - i. To be requested (at least three semesters in advance, see below) if the faculty member is applying for external fellowships/grants/awards to support scholarly/research leave. (Section 6.3.6, p. 53, in the [Faculty Handbook](#)).
 - ii. To be used for non-FDL scholarly/research leave.
- f. [PERSONAL LEAVE OF ABSENCE](#) (WITHOUT PAY)
 - i. From the [Faculty Handbook](#) (Section 6.3.7, p. 53): A regular employee may request leave without pay for personal reasons by making a request in writing to his or her supervisor and department head. Personal leave is approved or disapproved on an individual basis and predicated on departmental needs and requirements.

2. MECHANISM TO GENERATE SEMESTER(S) OF LEAVE:

- a. [COURSE BANKING](#)
 - i. Rationale ([Faculty Handbook](#), p. 55): “The need of many faculty members upon occasion to devote large uninterrupted amounts of time to a single research or creative project without teaching or committee work and to spend time periodically in personal renewal and development is fundamental to every good university.”
 - ii. Without external funding, a faculty member can be awarded a ZTA through course banking. All proposed course banking must be consistent with the policies of the unit, the [College of Arts & Sciences](#) and the [Faculty Handbook](#) (Section 6.4.4, pp. 54-55).
 - iii. Use of course banking to extend a one-semester FDL to a full-year FDL is encouraged.

- iv. Course banking must be arranged and approved in advance with a letter by the unit's head/director, and approved by the College.

3. PROCESS FOR APPLYING FOR LEAVE:

- a. All leave requests must be submitted in hard copy to the Office of the Associate Dean for Academic Personnel using the REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF FACULTY LEAVE form and cover sheet.
- b. FOR NON-FDL LEAVES EXTERNALLY-FUNDED BY FELLOWSHIPS/GRANTS/AWARDS:
 - i. BEFORE formally applying to the outside institution, the faculty member must discuss with their Head/Director the timing of, and how their proposed absence would impact the teaching and service missions of their unit.
 - ii. In consultation and with the approval of their Head/Director, the faculty member determines the appropriate type of leave to be requested from the College (i.e. Educational Leave of Absence With or Without Pay)
 - iii. The faculty member's leave request is submitted in hard copy by their Head/Director to the Office of the Associate Dean for Academic Personnel using the College's REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF FACULTY LEAVE form.
 - 1. The request must include a list of courses the faculty member normally teaches and an explanation of how these curricular needs will be satisfied in the faculty member's absence.
 - 2. The request must include an explanation of how the faculty member's service responsibilities will be satisfied during their absence.
 - iv. The faculty member's leave request is submitted by their Head/Director to the Office of the Associate Dean for Academic Personnel.
 - v. The faculty member should notify the College and ORE about a proposal submission by entering it in Cayuse no later than the external agency's due date, if the proposal is submitted directly by the PI to the agency. If the proposal is submitted by UT, the usual deadline dates apply: allow 5 business days for ORE approval, and one additional business day for College approval. Faculty are only eligible for [In-Residence Supplemental Funding](#) provided by the College and ORE if they have used Cayuse for notification of the proposal submission.
- c. TIMING & ELIGIBILITY:
 - i. No faculty member shall be on leave, excluding FMDA, longer than one year (e.g. Fall, Spring, Summer). If the faculty member receives multiple awards for a single year, this does not create an entitlement to more than one year of leave. In some cases, the individual must choose between awards; in other cases, it is possible to combine them to achieve a higher level of support.
 - ii. Upon completion of a one-semester leave, a faculty member must resume their full professional responsibilities for two consecutive semesters (1 Fall

and 1 Spring; Summers do not count) before they are eligible to take another leave.

- iii. Upon completion of a one-year leave, a faculty member must resume their full professional responsibilities for four consecutive semesters (2 Falls and 2 Springs; Summers do not count) before they are eligible to take another leave.
 - iv. Research leave applications must be submitted to the College at least three semesters in advance of the anticipated leave.
- d. LEAVE OF ABSENCE: PAID OR UNPAID?
- i. If the fellowship/grant/award will provide the faculty member's full pay and benefits during the entire leave period **directly** to the individual (without flowing through UT), then an **unpaid LOA** is appropriate.
 - 1. An unpaid leave means that no salary or benefits will be provided by UT to the faculty member while they are on leave.
 - 2. For unpaid leaves, the College will provide funds from the faculty member's released salary to pay for replacement teaching in their absence.
 - ii. If the fellowship/grant/award is **not paid directly** to the individual (but is distributed through the University), and/or will NOT provide the faculty member's full pay and benefits, then a **paid LOA** should be requested.
 - 3. The total amount and source(s) of both external and internal funding must be disclosed on the Request for Approval of Faculty Leave of Absence form.
 - 4. In order to be approved for a paid LOA, the faculty member's fellowship/grant/award must be able to provide sufficient funding (see below) to pay for the faculty member's teaching responsibilities during the leave period.
 - a. For FY18, "sufficient funding" = the greater of \$4500/course or the actual cost of replacement teaching.
 - iii. If the fellowship or award is competitive and requires residence at an academic research center, library, or university, and insufficiently covers differences in the cost of living between Knoxville and the location where the research/scholarship/creative activity is to be undertaken, then the faculty member may apply for Supplemental Funding for In-Residence Fellowship Awards through the College and ORE.
 - iv. The [Supplemental Funding request](#) should be submitted by the department head to the Associate Dean for Research & Facilities, after the terms of the Leave of Absence have been approved by the College.