

## UTIA Faculty Development Leave

### Guidelines and Procedures

August 25, 2021

**NOTE: Requests are due to the Sr. Vice President/Sr. Vice Chancellor Office no less than 4 months prior to the proposed date of leave.**

[Knoxville Faculty Development Leave Application and Contract](#)

[2015 TCRS form for Retirement Credit for Educational Leave of Absence](#)

#### **A. Purpose**

Granting of professional leave strengthens an institution's academic program by enhancing the faculty member's teaching effectiveness and scholarship. The major purpose is to provide regular opportunities for continued professional growth, reinvigorated intellectual achievement, and development of new skills and perspectives through study, research, writing, and training. A sound, well-administered professional leave policy is an important inducement in the recruitment and retention of top quality faculty to major research universities.

A faculty member is awarded professional leave on the merits of a specific proposal for professional development. The award is an investment by the university in the expectation that the leave will enhance the faculty member's ability to contribute to the objectives of the university and to student development. The improvements sought during a professional leave should benefit the work of the faculty member, department, college, and the university. Only professional leave proposals that meet this criterion will be accepted and approved by the university.

The purposes for which professional leave may be granted include:

- Research on significant problems and issues
- Development of new teaching, research and Extension programs
- Important creative or descriptive work in any means of expression
- Post-doctoral study at another institution
- Other approved projects, including innovations in teaching and learning

#### **B. Eligibility Requirements**

Full-time tenured faculty with a minimum of six years full-time campus service since any previously granted professional leave (or six years at the time of an initial professional leave).

## **C. Duration**

Eligible full-time faculty members may be granted professional leave for either

1. one-half the faculty member's annual appointment period at full base salary OR
2. the full annual appointment period at one half base salary.

## **D. Additional Compensation and Benefits**

1. A faculty member normally will be permitted to accept only such grants, contracts, awards, fellowships, and other additional compensation as are given to support the approved professional leave project or are consistent with university policy. The approval of the Sr. Vice President/Sr. Vice Chancellor must be obtained prior to accepting any additional compensation beyond that specified in points 2–5 below.
2. A fellowship, grant-in-aid, or government-sponsored exchange lectureship may be accepted for the period of the leave if acceptance will promote the purpose of the leave and is approved by the Sr. Vice President/Sr. Vice Chancellor.
3. If approved by the Sr. Vice President/Sr. Vice Chancellor, a faculty member on leave normally will be permitted to earn non-UT income in accordance with the UT Policy on Compensated Outside Services.
4. To the extent permitted by state law, all benefits available to the faculty member under normal service shall be available during professional leave.
5. Compensation shall be paid monthly, unless approved otherwise.

## **E. Return to the University**

The professional leave recipient shall return to the university for one year following the professional leave or return the appropriate funds to the university (see attached contract).

## **F. Reporting Requirement**

Within three months of returning from leave, the faculty member shall submit to the Sr. Vice President/Sr. Vice Chancellor, through the department head, if applicable, and/or the dean, a report of activities undertaken which will be used in evaluating the faculty member's future applications for professional leave.

Once accepted by the Sr. Vice President/Sr. Vice Chancellor, the report on the professional leave will be used as part of the considerations for merit raises and subsequent promotion.

## **G. Application Process**

A professional leave proposal should include at least the following information:

1. a packet of leave application materials ([two-page contract/fringe benefits sheet](#); [2015 TCRS form](#)) (*Please leave the Budget Director Signature line unsigned. It will be reviewed by the Assistant Provost of Finance*);
2. a statement of the purpose and nature of the professional leave project;
3. a description of the importance of the work to the mission of the university;
4. a description of the methodology to be used;
5. a statement of the results anticipated from the professional leave;
6. an indication of why professional leave is necessary for the conduct of the project (i.e., why is the project not within the normal scope of scholarly or service activities routinely expected of faculty members);
7. a letter indicating its intent to cooperate with the project if another agency, organization, or institution will be involved;
8. a statement detailing any expected outside compensation or reimbursement;
9. a letter of approval from the Department Head per the approval process in section H. below; **(This step only applies to colleges with departments.)**
10. a letter of approval from the Dean per the approval process in section H. below; and
11. a curriculum vitae, including dates of employment at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, and dates of previous professional leaves.

## H. Approval Procedure/Steps

1. Each department or other applicable unit will determine how many faculty members can be on professional leave in a given year based on its instructional needs.

2. The UTIA Promotion and Tenure Review Committee, or the CVM Promotion and Tenure Review Committee, shall review proposals according to the following criteria:

- The contribution the professional leave will make toward increasing faculty members' knowledge of and ability to teach their discipline;
- The practicality of the proposal in light of available resources;
- The number of years an applicant has served at the university; and
- The results of an applicant's earlier professional leaves.

3. The Institute or CVM committee makes a recommendation to approve, postpone, or reject each application. Each recommendation should clearly state:

- The reasons for the decision, including an appraisal of the project;
- Why the decision is consistent with this policy;
- An assessment of the effect the faculty member's absence, if approved, would have on the academic program.

4. The application and review are to be forwarded to the department head. The department head should assess effects of the leave on teaching, research, and Extension academic programs, indicate how the faculty member's responsibilities will be met, and sign his/her statement of support. The head's recommendation and committee recommendation are then forwarded to the dean(s). The dean(s) should assess effects of the leave on academic programs,

indicate how the faculty member's responsibilities will be met, sign his/her statement of support, and determine whether any further recommendations are appropriate prior to forwarding the application to the Sr. Vice President/Sr. Vice Chancellor.

5. The above materials are to be sent for approval/disapproval to the Sr. Vice President/Sr. Vice Chancellor. The faculty member shall be notified of the decision by the Sr. Vice President/Sr. Vice Chancellor with copies of the decision to the dean and the department head, if applicable. The faculty member shall receive a copy of any recommendations and the completed contract materials.

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