

# LEAVES OF ABSENCE WITHOUT PAY (LWOP) (FACULTY AND ACADEMIC PROFESSIONALS)

OFFICE OF THE PROVOST  
COMMUNICATION NO. 20

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## Overview

There are many situations in which a one-semester or one-year leave of absence without pay may be justified, and a reasonably flexible attitude on this matter should be adopted, so long as the best interests of the University are served by granting such a leave. Leaves for longer periods, or frequently recurring leaves, even if not in consecutive years, normally are not in the best interests of the University. Deans and department heads are urged to give careful consideration to requests for leaves without pay.

Note: Requests for leave for family or medical reasons that are eligible under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) must be approved for up to twelve weeks of paid and/or unpaid leave during each consecutive 12-month period for which eligibility criteria have been met. Consult the Campus Administrative Manual, Section IX/A-10 for that policy and the FMLA leave form.

## Criteria

Leaves of absence without pay should be infrequent, approved only after previous justification by the appropriate dean to maintain the best interests of the University. Multiple approvals are necessary to process a leave request. The attached form (Attachment 1) should be used when requesting a leave.

The following points summarize the basic philosophy concerning leaves without pay:

1. Requests should not be approved unless the best interests of the University can reasonably be considered to be served by granting such a leave. The request of an individual for leave should not be approved without good reason—whatever its proposed duration. However, if the leave is requested for family or medical reasons, and the applicant is eligible under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) of 1993, the unit must approve such a leave for up to twelve weeks. (See Campus Administrative Manual policy on Family and Medical Leave, Section IX/A – 10, for more details.)
2. It is the obligation of the head of the department to justify approval of the leave by indicating: (a) what provision will be made to have the applicant's work done during the leave; (b) why the department's program, considered overall, will not be adversely affected; and (c) why granting this leave is in the best interest of the University. Faculty who have accepted a position at another institution will, in most instances, not be granted an Educational Leave, but may be granted a Personal Leave. Before approving such a request, the dean should investigate not only the particular request but the general staff situation of the department, making sure that the request is justifiable. Note that approval of the Provost is still required.

3. A leave of absence for two consecutive years primarily to teach at another institution, or any leave to accept an administrative position at another institution, should not ordinarily be approved and under no circumstances should it be approved unless the University's best interests clearly dictate such an exception. If the dean or other recommending administrator thinks, after careful inquiry, that an exception to this rule should be allowed, the reasons for such an exception should be stated in a letter to the Provost.
4. Recurring requests for leaves of absence—even when not for consecutive years—should not be approved without very strong justification. Faculty members cannot meet their obligations to the University, and especially those to graduate students, while teaching at other institutions.

### **Procedures**

1. The employee determines the period of his/her leave request and completes the Faculty and Academic Professional Leave of Absence Without Pay form (Attachment 1).
2. Following discussion with the supervisor, the leave request form is signed by the supervisor and submitted to the unit head for review and approval.
3. The form is submitted to the College Dean for review and signature.
4. The leave request form is submitted to the Office of Academic Human Resources for review of information. That office secures approval from the Provost for faculty leaves.
5. A leave approval letter is prepared with copies to the Board of Trustees, the Benefits Center, the department, college, and school if appropriate, as well as to the individual's personnel file, maintained by the Office of Academic Human Resources.

Note 1: Unit representatives may elect to attach supporting information to the form.

Note 2: Tenure-track faculty must attach to the leave request the form that indicates whether service will be counted toward the completion of the probationary period (Attachment 2). The leave request will not be processed without that form.

### **Assistance**

Questions about the leave of absence without pay policy should be directed to the Office of Academic Human Resources (333-6747).

### **Attachments**

Leave of Absence Without Pay Request (Faculty and Academic Professionals) Form  
Service Toward Completion of the Probationary Period Form