

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to meet the objectives of faculty development as outlined in the Texas Education Code, Chapter 51, to provide a sound program of faculty development leaves of absence designed to enable the faculty member to engage in professional development, study, research, writing, and similar projects for the purpose of adding to the knowledge available to the faculty member, the students, and the institution. Faculty Development Leaves shall be awarded on the basis of merit and are subject to the availability of funding.

2. GENERAL PROVISIONS

2.01 Eligible Faculty

- a. For purposes of this policy, "eligible faculty" means a person who is employed by Sam Houston State University on a full-time basis as a member of the tenured faculty or tenured professional librarians at the time of application for leave. This term does not include a person employed in a position that is in the institution's classified personnel system.
- b. Tenured faculty members are eligible for a Faculty Development Leave when the starting date of the leave occurs after completion of:
 - (1) five (5) consecutive years of service with Sam Houston State University;
 - (2) a minimum of five (5) consecutive years of service with Sam Houston State University since completing their last Faculty Development Leave, and as outlined in this policy; and
 - (3) acceptable reports from all previous development leaves, if any, have been submitted to their chair.
- c. Exceptions to the above provisions are presented in Section 6.

2.02 Funding

- a. Faculty Development Leaves may be funded from the appropriations specifically for that purpose or from such other funds as might be available to the institution or college (Tex. Educ. Code 51.105).

- b. Not more than six percent (6%) of the faculty members of any institution of higher education may be on Faculty Developmental Leaves at any one time (Tex. Educ. Code 51.106). Practically, the available funding permits a much smaller percentage of available faculty leaves.

2.03 The Faculty Development Leave Committee (FDLC) shall consist of nine (9) tenured faculty members. The President makes all appointments from University Faculty Senate nominations. The committee annually elects the chair. Committee members serve three-year terms expiring at the end of the fiscal year. The Faculty Development Leave Committee acts only in an advisory capacity to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. It makes recommendations but makes no awards in its own right.

2.04 The Provost may recommend to the President a Faculty Development Leave when, in his/her judgment, to do so is in the best interest of the University.

3. APPLICATION PROCESS

3.01 Tenured faculty submit application materials to the administrative officer of the faculty member's academic unit. Each administrative officer will have at least seven (7) days to forward leave application materials to the next administrative level with or without comment.

3.02 Calendar

- a. By the first Monday of October – Applicants will submit their completed application packet to the chair of their academic unit. A Faculty Development Leave application packet is attached to this policy.
- b. The second Monday of October – Deadline for the chair to verify the applicants' eligibility, provide comments, and forward application packets to the office of the dean/director.
- c. The third Monday of October – Deadline for the dean/director to review and provide comments on the application packets. The dean/director should forward the application packet, along with comments, to the Office of the Provost.
- d. By the fourth Monday of October – Deadline for the Office of the Provost to forward complete application packets to each member of the FDLC.

- e. The fourth Monday in November – Deadline for FDLC to forward comments and rankings to the Office of the Provost.
- f. The second Monday of December – Deadline for the Provost to forward completed packets and FDLC recommendations to the deans. Only application materials unfunded by the Provost, but recommended by the FDLC, will be forwarded to their respective dean’s office for consideration of funding.
- g. By the third Monday in December – Deadline for the deans to forward to the Provost all applications that they recommend for Faculty Development Leave funded by the college.
- h. By the second Monday in January – Deadline for the Provost to forward completed packets and recommendations to the Office of the President.
- i. By the fourth Monday in January – All faculty members that submitted applications for developmental leave will be notified in writing with copies to their respective deans of the acceptance or rejection of their application. Faculty members may contact the Office of the Provost to view file comments.

3.03 To be considered for future Faculty Development Leaves, applicants not receiving leaves must submit updated applications for reconsideration for any succeeding semester(s).

4. FACULTY DEVELOPMENT LEAVE COMMITTEE

4.01 Duties

The FDLC will use the evaluation form found in the application packet to provide ranking scores and comments of each application packet to the Office of the Provost.

4.02 Ranking Criteria

- a. Eligible faculty interested in academic or professional pursuits on-campus or off-campus to study pedagogy, conduct research or creative activities, develop writing projects, conduct field observation, and/or enhance one’s discipline are encouraged to apply for development leaves.
- b. The following general criteria will be used by the FDLC to evaluate the application:

- (1) The applicant presents a comprehensive and feasible scheme of work that will enhance the applicant's knowledge and ability in terms of professional training, teaching, scholarship, or service and which is consistent with the needs of the University. External endorsement of projects will count strongly in this evaluation.
- (2) The applicant specifies a clear set of outcomes and/or deliverables to be made at the completion of the project and for which the candidate is responsible.
- (3) The applicant makes a convincing case that she/he will successfully accomplish the project. Such a case may be made on the basis of "track record" (a fully documented prior record in the same or in a cognate field of activity) or, in order to facilitate development and experimentation in new fields, by a comprehensively justified new plan that is endorsed by the applicant's immediate supervisor.

5. ADMINISTRATION DUTIES

5.01 Departmental Duties

- a. Faculty Development Leaves are authorized for the purpose of increasing the value of the recipient's sustained contributions to the department/school and the University by providing the individual an opportunity for professional growth.
- b. In most cases, the academic department/school will assume the work of an individual granted leave. If the academic department/school is unable to absorb the load of a faculty member who is awarded a development leave, the chair will consult with the dean to develop a funding plan or to recommend against approval. Staffing and budgetary concerns, however, will not factor into the committee's evaluations.
- c. Upon receiving the application packet, the chair should provide comments and a score and then forward the packet to the dean of the college.

5.02 Duties of the Dean/Director

- a. Upon receiving the application packet, the dean/director should provide comments and a score in the application sections titled, "Dean/Director Statement."

- b. Once completed, the application packet should be forwarded to the Office of the Provost.

5.03 Duties of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

- a. The Office of the Provost will notify the faculty of the deadlines for applying for developmental leaves.
- b. The Provost will forward complete application packets to each member of the FDLC.
- c. The Provost shall make final recommendations for leaves, if any, to the President.
- d. Each of the application files, along with administrator's comments and rankings, shall be maintained for one calendar year. Files including administrator and committee comments should be made readily available to the submitting faculty member.
- e. Successful application packets may be used by the University for such purposes as training and public relations.
- f. The Office of the Provost will maintain a small reference collection of examples of successful applications that will serve as models for future applicants.

5.04 Duties of the President

The President shall approve or deny development leave requests in consultation with the Provost.

6. PROGRAM CONDITIONS

- 6.01 Faculty members may have a Faculty Development Leave for one academic year at one-half their regular salary, or for one academic semester at their full salary. (An academic year is defined as the nine-month period contained in the fall and spring semesters; development leaves are not authorized for summer sessions.)
- 6.02 Faculty on development leave are excused from all normal service duties except when dictated by policy. A faculty member may choose to participate or not in the Department Promotion and Tenure Advisory Committee (DPTAC).

- 6.03 It is not required that faculty members obtain matching funds to be eligible for development leave; however, faculty members who are granted development leave are encouraged to seek additional funding from authorized and appropriate external sources, if appropriate for the proposed project.
- 6.04 Recipients of Faculty Development Leaves must submit a written report of their activity to the appropriate departmental chair, dean, and the Provost. The report, not to exceed three (3) pages in length, should explain activities undertaken while on leave and the perceived benefits to both the faculty member and the institution. The report will indicate whether any possible patentable or copyrightable intellectual property was created during the leave.
- Reports of their activity while on leave must be submitted by May 1 for a fall semester leave and by November 1 for a spring semester leave. Those on a full year leave must submit a progress report at the mid-leave reporting period and a final report by November 1. Development leave reports should be accompanied by a memo addressed to the Provost through the department chair and the dean.
- 6.05 A faculty member on Faculty Development Leave may accept a grant or stipend for study, research, or travel from any institution of higher education, charitable, religious, or educational corporation or foundation; from any business enterprise; or from any state, federal, or local government, but must provide an accounting of all such funds to the University for reporting to the Board of Regents. However, the Board of Regents must approve specifically any outside employment.
- 6.06 If the conditions under which the proposed development leave was approved should change, the Provost should be notified within a reasonable time. If the new circumstances require a substantial change in the project, the Provost will refer the matter to the Faculty Development Leave Committee for recommendation.
- 6.07 Faculty members on Faculty Development Leave will retain their rights and eligibility for benefits to hospitalization, medical insurance, income protection, life insurance, and other such programs in force for full-time faculty members. Faculty electing half-time, two-semester leaves and faculty electing full-time, one-semester leaves may have different status with respect to eligibility for employment benefits. Concurrent University assignments and responsibilities can affect this eligibility. It is highly recommended that faculty anticipating a leave meet with a Human Resources representative in consultation with his/her department chair to determine the precise individual cost for these options.

- 6.08 Exceptions to the policies and procedures set forth above may be authorized only by the President of the University as authorized by the Board of Regents, The Texas State University System, or by action of the Board of Regents. The activities of the year on leave may be considered for merit, if such advances are warranted using the existing faculty evaluation system.
- 6.09 The faculty member may petition, in writing, the President of the University through the appropriate program coordinator and/or chair, dean/Director of the Newton Gresham Library, and the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs to have the approved leave of absence count as service.
- 6.10 Petitions for merit or service time must be approved prior to the faculty member's departure on the leave of absence. If the faculty member's request to have an approved leave of absence apply toward merit or service is approved by the President, such approval will be in writing and will be limited to a period of one academic year.
- 6.11 Faculty members having signed a legal agreement to serve one full academic year after completion of the leave shall be required to reimburse the University in the amount they receive as salary and fringe benefits from the State while on leave if they should refuse to fulfill the year of service after the leave. As a condition of receipt of the leave, a faculty member must execute a contract that provides the University a legal remedy should he/she refuse to fulfill the year of service after the leave. Permanent disability attested to by a medical doctor, selected by the University, could constitute basis for exemption.

7. DEFINITION OF FACULTY DISCRETIONARY LEAVE

- 7.01 Faculty discretionary leave opportunities for professional development and or program improvement often become available on short notice and fall outside the planning and decision-making time parameters required for the faculty development leave program. Examples of such opportunities include multi-week staff and faculty training programs, short-term visiting research collaborations, and short-term international exchange opportunities. When such opportunities arise, a faculty discretionary leave can be proposed to the dean of their college. In some cases, the dean may invite faculty to take advantage of such opportunities. A brief proposal that describes the purpose of the leave, as well as a detailed plan for covering assigned duties during the period of the leave, should be prepared in consultation with the chair and dean. Any costs associated with the faculty discretionary leave will be borne by the College. If acceptable, the dean

will then make a recommendation to the Provost who will make the final determination as to whether or not to award the requested leave.

7.02 Occasionally, faculty members receive appointments that require leaves from campus that are funded by entities outside of the University. These externally-funded leaves include, but are not limited to, those associated with research grants, visiting appointments to other institutions, temporary appointments to government agencies, or participation in faculty exchange programs, etc. Such appointments are addressed separately from the Faculty Development Leave Policy and do not alter the faculty member's eligibility for Faculty Development Leave. Prior to accepting externally funded appointments, faculty must obtain approval from their department chair and dean.

APPROVED: _____ < signed > _____
Dana G. Hoyt, President

DATED: _____ 5/28/19 _____

CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

This academic policy statement (APS) has been approved by the reviewer(s) listed below and represents SHSU's Division of Academic Affairs' policy from the date of this document until superseded.

Original:	March 28, 1980	Review Cycle:	Five years*
Reviewer(s):	Council of Academic Deans Faculty Senate Academic Affairs Council	Review Date:	Spring 2022

Approved: _____ < signed > _____ Date: _____ 5/28/19 _____
Richard Eglsaer
Provost and Vice President
for Academic Affairs

*Effective January 2018, Academic Policy Statements will be reviewed on a rotating 5-year schedule. To transition to a distributed review load, some policies may be reviewed prior to the 5-year timeframe, with subsequent reviews transitioning to the 5-year schedule.

- Attachment 1 - Agreement to Return to University and with Regarding to Repayment in the Event Faculty Member Does Not Return
- Attachment 2 - Application for Faculty Development Leave
- Attachment 3 - Section to be Completed by the Chair
- Attachment 4 - Section to be Completed by the Dean/Director
- Attachment 5 - Section to be Completed by the Faculty Development Leave Committee Members
- Attachment 6 - Section to be Completed by the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs