

“Sabbatical Guidelines”, Mark-up, clean copy, August 2008
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SABBATICAL LEAVE GUIDELINES

Sabbatical leaves are essential to the intellectual health of Salisbury University in general and its faculty in particular. While on sabbatical, faculty can focus on scholarly projects in a way not possible in a regular semester. Outcomes of sabbaticals are numerous and varied, but they often enhance the reputation of Salisbury University on a national and international scale. Additionally, students benefit from the enhancements faculty bring to the classroom and faculty benefit from the invigoration of focusing in one’s field of study without the responsibilities of teaching and service.

As the number of faculty eligible for sabbatical increases, the money allocated for funding sabbaticals must also increase. Departments and schools are urged to develop sabbatical schedules to plan ahead for when each faculty member is eligible for a sabbatical and for when he or she plans to apply for one. If for any one semester, the number of faculty applying would place an inordinate burden on either the delivery of the curriculum or the university budget, chairs and deans will work together to develop a reasonable schedule ensuring an expeditious time line for all approved sabbaticals. If departments plan ahead, students can be advised of an upcoming semester when a core course will not be offered due to a sabbatical leave.

Types of projects

While it is impossible to create an exhaustive list of the types of projects that are considered sabbatical-worthy, the following are examples that have been supported in the past:

1. Research in one’s discipline
2. Research related to teaching practices, learning strategies
3. Extensive curriculum development and evaluation
4. Creative endeavors-art, music, dance, poetry, play-writing, and others
5. Collaborative projects-inter-departmental, inter-institutional (local, regional, state, national, international)
6. International learning and/or activities

In all of the above examples, the applicant must make the case for how a project links with his or her own professional development and benefits students, departments, the university, and/or the community.

Expectations for proposals

It is the faculty member’s responsibility to craft a well written sabbatical proposal clearly outlining the nature of the project, the proposed work during the sabbatical period, and the expected benefits to the faculty member, students, the school, and the University. If this is a second or third sabbatical, a post-sabbatical report (Part B) from the previous sabbatical should be included.

It is the role and the responsibility of the department chair and dean to write unambiguous but powerful letters of support or non support. A reference to the previous sabbatical and successful outcome is useful. The department chair is in the best position to judge the merit and benefits of the proposal since he or she is familiar with the subject material. Consequently, the department chair needs to be as specific as possible.

We advocate approval of all sabbatical proposals that have received the endorsement of the chair and dean as noted above and meet the expectations outlined below.

A well developed proposal should demonstrate the following:

- ✓ **The project develops and/or rejuvenates the academic spirit of the faculty member.** Show how the project builds on past scholarly efforts or is a direct outgrowth from them, even if the proposed project is in an entirely new direction. Provide background information on the topic to be studied explaining how the topic fits in its larger academic field
- ✓ **Clarity about research design, outcomes of the project, and a reasonable plan to achieve them.** Provide evidence of scholarly preparation and awareness of the current state of the field of interest and a plan of work.
- ✓ **Sufficient information to show that there will be funds, transportation, permission to use other facilities, etc. (if the research requires these).** If faculty plan to teach at another institution to gain access to that institution's resources during the sabbatical, they should first consult with the Provost regarding the appropriateness of that plan and then explain how/why teaching at another institution is related to the sabbatical project. The proposal should include a clear explanation as to why teaching or earning an income elsewhere should justify a sabbatical leave. Include evidence of effort to secure external funding and/or explanations of how any funding will occur, if applicable. A contingency plan if external funding is not approved (personal funds, etc.) should be provided.
- ✓ **For collaborative projects, the role of each investigator should be clearly delineated.** In particular, avoid the appearance that collaborators are doing the project without the benefit of a sabbatical while the faculty member is trying to justify that the project needs a sabbatical for completion.
- ✓ **A clear and concise format.** Write concisely, but in a way that can be understood by your faculty colleagues outside of the discipline. Most good proposals are at least 2 pages, but not more than 5. Put the name of the faculty member and the date at top of proposal page. Use one inch margins, double-space and font size of 10 or 12.

Expectations at the end of a sabbatical

Timely completion of a post-sabbatical report (Part B) with submission to the department chair within 6 months of sabbatical completion is of extreme importance. Relevant updates can be appended to this report when it is included in subsequent sabbatical applications. The purpose of this report is to provide a summary as to how the faculty, students, department, school, and the university as well as the community (if applicable) have benefited from the outcomes of the sabbatical. These post-sabbatical reports will play a vital role when faculty apply for subsequent sabbaticals as they must be attached to future sabbatical proposal requests and chairs are urged to refer to them when considering endorsement of subsequent sabbaticals.

Faculty Welfare Committee 4/8/08
Revised by Curtin and O'Loughlin August/08

DRAFT 08-11-08