



<b>POLICY TITLE</b>	Faculty Sabbatical Leave	<b>Policy Number</b>	640
<b>Section</b>	Academics	<b>Approval Date</b>	March 20, 2025
<b>Subsection</b>	Faculty	<b>Effective Date</b>	March 20, 2025
<b>Responsible Office</b>	Office of the Provost and Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs	<b>Last Review</b>	March 20, 2025

**1.0 PURPOSE**

1.1 Utah Valley University understands the significance of professional development, scholarly work, and creative endeavors for tenured faculty. To promote faculty members' effectiveness as instructors and to keep them updated in their respective fields, UVU offers sabbatical leave. Sabbatical leave provides qualified, tenured faculty with the chance to pursue scholarly, creative, and pedagogical activities, enhancing their ability to contribute to the University. Sabbatical leave is not a faculty benefit; it is a program for professional development and creativity that benefits the entire educational enterprise.

**2.0 REFERENCES**

- 2.1 Utah Board of Higher Education Policy R821 *Employee Benefits*
- 2.2 UVU Policy 114 *Conflict of Interest and Commitment*
- 2.3 UVU Policy 361 *Employee Leave*
- 2.4 UVU Policy 632 *Academic Rank Advancement*
- 2.5 UVU Policy 633 *Faculty Performance Evaluation and Feedback*
- 2.6 UVU Policy 654 *Faculty Merit Awards*

**3.0 DEFINITIONS**

**3.1 Academic employment:** Cumulative amount of full-time employment time since the start of the date of hire into a full-time faculty position at UVU, or the amount of time since the completion of the last sabbatical leave.

**3.2 Annual salary:** Annual faculty base salary, which does not include compensation for other assignments such as overload, administrative stipends, or summer contracts.



**3.3 Employment service:** Any activity or duty that is required or requested as a normal part of a full-time faculty member's employment with the exception of required trainings and faculty annual reviews. This includes, but is not limited to, teaching, scholarship, and service.

**3.4 Good Standing:** The status of an employee who has no disciplinary action imposed or pending and has completed all mandatory trainings and faculty annual reviews.

**3.5 Sabbatical leave:** A paid leave of absence for one or two semesters for a faculty member's professional development and/or scholarly and creative works.

**3.6 Sabbatical leave proposal:** *Faculty Sabbatical Leave Proposal Application Form* and accompanying documentation prepared by a faculty member that details their goals and purpose for a sabbatical leave.

**3.7 Faculty Sabbatical Leave Template:** A standard template used across the University for sabbatical leave.

**3.8 Sabbatical leave report:** A written report prepared by a returning faculty member describing and evaluating their activities during their sabbatical leave period. Faculty use the *Faculty Sabbatical Leave Template* to prepare this report.

## 4.0 POLICY

### 4.1 Eligibility

**4.1.1** Utah Valley University's sabbatical leave program is available to all tenured faculty members in good standing with a total of at least six years of academic employment to UVU. The status as a UVU full-time employee must be continuous.

**4.1.2** Time spent under *Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)* leave is counted toward academic employment. Voluntary leaves of absence do not count toward academic employment.

**4.1.3** After completing a sabbatical leave, a faculty member shall again become eligible for another sabbatical leave after an additional six years of academic employment to UVU, no matter the length of the sabbatical leave taken.

**4.1.4** Upon recommendation of the department chair and the dean, the Provost may waive the basic eligibility criteria when, in their judgment, unusual conditions exist that justify granting a sabbatical leave. This may include time-sensitive matters such as when proposals need advance confirmation or similar situations.



**4.1.5** Sabbatical leaves are subject to the availability of department hourly budget funds for hiring part-time replacement instructors, which may limit the number of sabbatical leaves approved each year.

#### **4.2 Length and Compensation**

**4.2.1** A sabbatical leave consists of one or two semesters of leave following the approval of a sabbatical leave proposal.

**4.2.2** For a one-semester leave, the faculty member shall be compensated at 100 percent of their annual base salary, prorated for one semester.

**4.2.3** For a two-semester leave, the faculty member shall be compensated at 80 percent of their annual base salary.

**4.2.4** A faculty member on sabbatical leave may accept a fellowship, assistantship, research grant, or any other form of employment or compensation so long as the corresponding time commitment does not conflict with the faculty member's ability to complete the goals approved in their sabbatical leave proposal. Any employment, compensation, or time commitment that is not related directly to the proposed sabbatical leave should be reported via the *Conflict-of-Interest Disclosure Form* in accordance with UVU Policy 114 *Conflict of Interest and Commitment*.

**4.2.5** A faculty member may also receive an allowance from non-UVU sources for transportation, housing, and/or cost-of-living differentials, etc.

**4.2.6** Any additional compensation or allowance acquired during a sabbatical leave shall not affect the computation of the UVU compensation.

#### **4.3 Faculty Sabbatical Leave Template**

**4.3.1** The *Faculty Sabbatical Leave Template* is a standardized form that faculty use to submit their sabbatical leave proposal. Academic Affairs creates and maintains the template.

#### **4.4 Department Expectations During the Sabbatical**

**4.4.1** For the entire duration of the faculty member's sabbatical leave, their department shall provide replacement instruction, as necessary.

#### **4.5 Employment Status while on Sabbatical Leave**

**4.5.1** Faculty members currently on a sabbatical leave are considered unavailable to the University, college, department, or any division and shall not be requested or required to teach,



provide any level of service at the University, or produce scholarly/creative works, except as required by the sabbatical and in extenuating circumstances not normally expected of a full-time faculty member.

**4.5.2** While on sabbatical leave, faculty members retain UVU benefits and maintain their eligibility for all general or special adjustments in salary. Merit pay in the year in which the sabbatical leave is taken is addressed in UVU Policy 654 *Faculty Merit Awards*.

**4.5.3** While on sabbatical leave, a faculty member may not provide any employment service to UVU for additional compensation. Summer teaching and research is allowed if the sabbatical leave is for the Fall and/or Spring semesters.

**4.5.4** While on sabbatical leave, faculty members remain employees of the University and therefore must complete annual trainings required of all employees by President's Council.

**4.5.5** Regardless of the semester(s) in which they are on sabbatical leave, a faculty member must complete the regularly scheduled annual review.

#### **4.6 Faculty Sabbatical Leave Report**

**4.6.1** Upon completion of their sabbatical leave, the faculty member has a professional duty to accurately document the results of their sabbatical leave in their next annual review.

#### **4.7 Deviations from the Objectives of a Faculty Sabbatical Leave Proposal**

**4.7.1** The department chair and dean must approve all deviations from the outcomes and/or objectives of the original sabbatical leave proposal prior to the completion of the sabbatical.

**4.7.2** Any deviation that fundamentally changes the scope or duration of the sabbatical leave and projected outcomes must be approved by the department chair, the dean, the Provost, the President, and the Board of Trustees.

**4.7.3** If the deviations are approved and the sabbatical meets the new objectives, the sabbatical shall be deemed *successful*.

**4.7.4** If the deviations are not approved, and there is little to no evidence of sustained effort towards the objectives, the department chair and dean shall deem the sabbatical *unsuccessful*. The faculty member's *unsuccessful* sabbatical is addressed by the processes in UVU Policy 633 *Faculty Performance Evaluation and Feedback*.



#### **4.8 Obligations to Return from a Sabbatical Leave**

**4.8.1** If circumstances warrant the early abandonment of a sabbatical, then the faculty member and the department chair, in consultation with the dean and Provost, will determine how to return the faculty member to regular status.

**4.8.2** Upon completion of their sabbatical leave, a faculty member must return to academic employment at UVU for a period of time equal to the duration of the leave. If the faculty member does not return or returns for a shorter period of employment than required, UVU shall be entitled to a proportionate refund of the compensation paid during the leave.

### **5.0 PROCEDURES**

#### **5.1 Sabbatical Leave Application Process**

**5.1.1** Faculty who are eligible for sabbatical leave according to section 4.1 will start the application process by requesting access to the appropriate UVU template system through their dean. This must be done in accordance with the schedule in section 5.6.

**5.1.2** The dean provides the names of faculty members who wish to apply for sabbatical leave to the director of faculty development.

**5.1.3** The faculty member requesting sabbatical leave must submit their application by the date in the table in section 5.6.

**5.1.4** Faculty must indicate whether they are subject to any NOIN (Notice of Improvement Needed) or PIP (Performance Improvement Plan) as part of their application. A faculty member may be denied sabbatical leave depending on the severity and nature of the PIP or NOIN.

**5.1.5** If a proposed sabbatical activity would require commitment before the established approval date, a faculty member may request to have their application reviewed early; the faculty member shall provide evidence that an early commitment is required and the faculty member shall request access to the appropriate UVU template system as established in section 5.1.1.

**5.1.6** Late submissions, while rarely granted, are possible. If a proposed sabbatical activity presents itself after the published timeline, the faculty member shall submit a letter requesting and justifying the out-of-cycle request to the department chair. The department chair will make a recommendation to the dean, who will make a recommendation to the Provost and the Provost will make the final decision.



5.1.7 If during the process the faculty applicant is no longer in good standing, then the sabbatical leave proposal will not continue in the process. The reviewer who discovers lack of standing will notify the faculty member and previous reviewers.

## 5.2 University Criteria for Sabbatical Leave Proposals

5.2.1 Sabbatical leave proposals will be assessed using the following criteria:

5.2.1.1 Consistency with the mission of a teaching institution;

5.2.1.2 Meaningful impact on faculty development as a teacher and scholar;

5.2.1.3 Potential to lead to improved pedagogical outcomes; and

5.2.1.4 Impact on the faculty member's discipline or industry.

## 5.3 Sabbatical Approval Process

### 5.3.1 Overview

5.3.1.1 To gauge the merit of the proposal, all levels of review shall assess proposals using the university sabbatical criteria as defined in section 5.2.

5.3.1.2 Recommendations made as part of the sabbatical approval process shall remain confidential.

### 5.3.2 Department

5.3.2.1 The department chair reviews the proposals, makes a recommendation to approve or deny the proposals, and then submits the proposals with their recommendations to the dean. In order to advance a proposal, the department chair must approve the departmental supplemental teaching plan that is part of the *Faculty Sabbatical Leave Template*. Departments should ensure that any required course is adequately managed.

5.3.2.2 The department chair shall forward to the dean only the number of approved proposals for which the department has funding.

5.3.2.3 In order to encourage clear selections, deans may require departments to create sabbatical leave criteria to help guide department chairs in this process.

### 5.3.3 College/School

5.3.3.1 The dean or designee reviews the proposals and recommendations from the department chair.



**5.3.3.2** As part of the overall review of the sabbatical leave proposal, the dean also reviews the departmental supplemental teaching plan and either approves or rejects the plan. If the dean rejects the plan, the faculty member, chair, and dean must agree to a new supplemental teaching plan before the sabbatical proposal can advance. If the dean accepts the plan, no further action is needed, and the plan goes into effect only if the sabbatical proposal receives final approval from the President.

**5.3.3.3** The dean makes a recommendation to approve or deny the proposals and submits the proposals to the Provost.

#### **5.3.4 Provost**

**5.3.4.1** The Provost or designee reviews all proposals and recommendations forwarded by the dean, makes a recommendation to approve or deny the proposals, and submits the proposals to the President.

#### **5.3.5 President**

**5.3.5.1** The President reviews all proposals and recommendations forwarded by the Provost, and in consultation with the Board of Trustees, makes a decision to approve or deny the proposals.

**5.3.5.2** The President's decision is final.

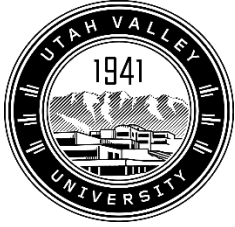
**5.3.5.3** The President may only rescind the approval of the sabbatical and its corresponding funding if cuts to the university budget make sabbaticals unaffordable to departments or deans, if the faculty member falls out of good standing with the University, or if the University discovers that the faculty member submitted the sabbatical proposal under false pretenses

**5.3.6** According to the dates in the table in section 5.6 the Provost's office shall notify candidates within fifteen (15) business days of the decision. In cases of denial, this notification shall include the reasons for the denial so that the faculty member may better prepare future proposals.

**5.3.7** Any NOIN or PIP for a faculty member who has had their sabbatical leave approved will be placed on hold until after the sabbatical leave.

#### **5.4 Early Sabbatical Approval**

**5.4.1** When external circumstances require faculty commitment far in advance of the proposed sabbatical term, faculty may submit their proposal early for advance approval. The department chair, the dean, and the Provost must approve the documentation of the need for early



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commitment, along with the sabbatical proposal. Aside from this additional documentation, the submission and approval process remain the same.





## **5.5 Annual Review Ratings for Sabbatical Leave**

**5.5.1** Sabbatical leaves are reported as part of the annual review. Sabbatical leave reports are submitted to the department chair at the annual review following completion of the sabbatical.

**5.5.2** The sabbatical leave report shall be reported through the faculty electronic submission platform; the report then becomes part of the faculty member's next annual review. In their annual review comments, the department chair shall indicate whether the sabbatical leave was successful based on the criteria.

**5.5.3** A sabbatical leave shall be deemed successful if the objectives outlined in the sabbatical leave proposal are met. A successful sabbatical shall count as a successful semester/year toward promotion.

**5.5.3.1** A sabbatical leave that is not successful due to reasons outside the faculty member's control shall be deemed a "justified unsuccessful sabbatical." A sabbatical leave that is not successful due to a faculty member's action or inaction shall be deemed an "unjustified unsuccessful sabbatical."

**5.5.3.2** For a justified unsuccessful sabbatical, the faculty member may not receive a rating higher than a "meets expectations" in the appropriate category on their annual review that year.

**5.5.3.3** For an unjustified unsuccessful sabbatical, the faculty member cannot receive a rating higher than "sometimes meets expectations" in the appropriate category on their annual review that year.

**5.5.4** The portion of the annual review that addresses the term of the sabbatical leave only needs to contain documentation of the sabbatical.



**5.6 Summary of Dates for Sabbatical Leave Proposals**

**Proposal Due Date for Fall Semester**

Date	Intent to apply is sent to:
Sept. 1	The dean submits finalized list of faculty who are applying for sabbatical leave to the director of faculty development.
	<b>Proposal is sent to:</b>
Oct. 25	Department Chair
Nov. 15	Dean
Dec. 15	Provost
Jan. 20	President
February	Board of Trustees

**Proposal Due Date for Spring Semester**

Date	Intent to apply is sent to:
Dec. 15	The dean submits finalized list of faculty who are applying for sabbatical leave to the director of faculty development.
	<b>Proposal is sent to:</b>
Feb. 25	Department Chair
Mar. 25	Dean
Apr. 20	Provost
May 20	President
June	Board of Trustees

<b>POLICY HISTORY</b>		
<b>Date of Last Formal Review:</b> March 20, 2025		
<b>Due Date of Next Review:</b> March 20, 2030		
Date of Last Action	Action Taken	Authorizing Entity
March 19, 2009	Approved.	UVU Board of Trustees
March 20, 2025	Revised policy approved through regular process.	UVU Board of Trustees

\*More information on the formal review can be found in Policy 101 section 4.7.3.