Policy Statement. The University recognizes there are conditions that may necessitate a faculty member's absence for a period of a semester or more. On such occasions, when the faculty member can reasonably be expected to return to duties following the absence, the University may grant a leave of absence without pay. This should be done rarely and only when the ongoing needs of the institution can be addressed by other means.

Application of Policy.   This policy applies to all full-time faculty members.

Definition(s).

Leave of Absence without Pay. "Leave of absence without pay" means a period of leave during which the faculty member does not receive compensation from any source of funds administered by the university.

PROCEDURES AND RESPONSIBILITIES.

Requests for Leaves of Absence without Pay. Full-time or part-time leaves of absence without pay may be granted to members of the faculty for study, research, writing, personal reasons, or other suitable purposes at the discretion and approval of the Provost for a period not to exceed one academic year. Such leaves may be extended for an additional academic year by approval of the President.   A leave of absence for a period exceeding two years ordinarily will not be granted.

The faculty member must submit a leave request form to the Provost through his or her respective chair and dean prior to the requested period of leave.   The leave request must detail the purpose of the leave, including how it is in the best interests of the University for the leave to be granted (i.e., how it will improve the teaching effectiveness or scholarly productivity of the individual).

When the leave of absence is requested for significant personal reasons, the reason for the leave of absence should be explained in the leave form with appropriate documentation. Sections on the form to be completed by the chair and dean must address how the university's needs will be met during the faculty member's proposed period of absence. Only in rare instances will a leave of absence be approved by the Provost without the support of the department chair and dean.

Benefits Administration.   The administration of a faculty member's benefits during a leave of absence without pay shall be as follows:

1. All accumulated leave must be expended before an employee is granted leave of absence

without pay for personal reasons.

2. Sick leave must first be used only if the employee is taking leave for a reason for which the employee is eligible to take sick leave.

3. Vacation or sick leaves are not accrued during a leave of absence without pay. However, if the faculty member has any fraction of paid employment in a month, it does not constitute a break in continuity of employment and he or she will be credited with sick leave and vacation entitlements for that month.

4. Except for military leave without pay, a full calendar month during which a faculty member is on leave without pay is not counted in computing total state service for purposes related to longevity pay or the rate of accrual of vacation leave or continuous state service for purposes related to merit salary provisions or vacation leave.

5. Contributions to the faculty member's retirement program will be suspended until he or she returns to work.

Return to Work. The faculty member shall return to work upon expiration of the leave of absence without pay period. Failure to return to work upon expiration of approved leave will be considered voluntary resignation of employment and tenure. A faculty member who returns to work at the termination of a leave of absence without pay will be reinstated in the same position he or she formerly held or in a position of similar status and pay.

References and Cross-references.
Tex. Educ. Code §51.108
Texas Government Code - Section 661.909
 Regents Rule 06.703

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