

Rationale: By adding the highlighted sentence below, WKU's sabbatical policy would be brought in line with the sabbatical policies of the University of Kentucky, University of Louisville, and Northern Kentucky University.

WKU Faculty Handbook, 25th ed., July 2019, pp. 57–59.

X.B. Sabbatical Leaves:

X.B1. Purpose

University policy provides for the granting of sabbatical leaves for the purpose of professional improvement of the faculty. Sabbaticals are typically granted only to a faculty member who is qualified in terms of consistently high job performance, has demonstrated success in previous research, and who submits a well-planned proposal for leave. In general, any activity related to a faculty appointment that will enhance the professional and scholarly growth of the applicant meets the basic criteria for a sabbatical leave request. Sabbaticals are not granted automatically and are constrained by budgetary, legal and other considerations. To be eligible for a sabbatical leave, a faculty member shall hold the rank of assistant professor or above, shall have tenure, and shall have completed six continuous full academic years of service at the University. **[Faculty members are eligible to apply for a sabbatical leave in their sixth year of service.]** Normally, sabbatical leaves are granted for either one semester at full pay or for two semesters at one-half pay. Summer sabbaticals may be granted only with special approval in exceptional cases. The approval for sabbatical leaves is based on professional accomplishments, not the passage of time. Notwithstanding this, however, sabbatical leaves will not be granted to an individual more than once every seven years.

X.B2. Application and Review

[58] Applications for sabbatical leaves must be submitted, in a manner to be prescribed by the Academic Affairs office, to the department head, by October 1 of the academic year preceding the date the leave would begin. The department head transmits a recommendation to the College Sabbatical Review Committee by October 15. Each College Sabbatical Review Committee will evaluate the proposals submitted within that college and transmit their recommendations, together with an assessment of the relative merits of the proposals, to the respective college dean by November 5. The dean will review the recommendations of the Sabbatical Review Committee and make his/her own recommendation to the Provost by November 15. Faculty members holding administrative positions are also eligible for sabbatical leaves. The Council of Academic Deans serves as a review committee for administrator applications and makes recommendations to the Provost. After consultation with the respective dean(s), the Provost shall make recommendations to the President by November 30. The President will make recommendations to the Board of Regents for consideration and approval at its January meeting.

X.B3. Obligations and Changes

The Provost shall provide the precise terms of approved sabbatical leaves to the faculty member. Within thirty (30) days after completion of a sabbatical leave, a report is to be submitted to the department head, dean and provost, outlining the benefits of the sabbatical in terms of scholarly growth of the faculty member. The College Sabbatical Review Committee must approve any major modification of plans by a leave recipient. Faculty members with approved academic-year sabbaticals may not change to one-semester sabbaticals. Faculty and administrators on either a sabbatical or paid leave are expected to return to the University for at least one academic year following the conclusion of the year in which the sabbatical or leave is taken. Those on a summer sabbatical must return for the academic year following the summer in which the leave is taken. Failure to comply obligates the individual to repay the University for the compensation received. This policy will prevail in all cases unless otherwise stipulated.

X.B4. Benefits during Sabbatical Periods

[59] Faculty members who participate in the Kentucky Teachers' Retirement System (KTRS) and who are granted sabbatical leave for one semester would continue to earn retirement service credit; however, faculty granted sabbatical leave for two semesters do not earn retirement service credit nor do they, or the university, make retirement contributions to KTRS during the period of the sabbatical leave. On the other hand, faculty who participate in the Optional Retirement Plan (ORP) and who are granted sabbatical leave (either at full pay or one-half pay) do continue to participate in the ORP; they and the University make the same contributions as in regular employment status. For the University's Sabbatical Leave Policy, see policy 1.130V on the Academic Affairs Policies page. For information on benefits during sabbatical assignments, see Policy No. 4.605V on the Human Resources Policies page.