



**Professional Development Leave #1710.260**

INITIAL EFFECTIVE DATE:	LAST REVISION DATE:	RESPONSIBLE UNIVERSITY DIVISION/DEPARTMENT
July 2005	May 7, 2025	Division of Human Resources Employee and Labor Relations

**POLICY STATEMENT**

Professional Development Leave is granted to increase an exempt employee’s value to the University as well as to the employee’s position and/or professional expertise. These opportunities should include enhanced opportunities for professional renewal, educational travel, study, field observations, research, writing or professional development. This leave is in part to be granted to allow the employee to further his/her education.

**Eligible employees must have been employed by the University for at least six (6) years of full-time continuous service and must meet the following criteria:**

- The employee’s work performance is superior and is reflected in the most recent performance evaluation with an overall rating of 4.0.
- The University deems that there are acceptable resources and adequate coverage available during the employee’s absence. Eligible employees may be asked to time their professional development leave in accordance with program needs and the ability of the department to finance the leave.
- The employee provides a detailed description and documentation of the professional development opportunity as well as a report once the leave is completed.
- Professional development leave could be at half pay for a full academic year or at full pay for one semester.
- The employee must guarantee that at the end of the leave, he/she will return to employment at the University for at least one year following the leave.
- An employee who does not return to the University shall reimburse the University for the salary received during the professional development leave.

- If the employee receives outside income as a result of the professional development experience, he/she must report such income to the University.
- University compensation will normally be reduced by the amount necessary to bring the total income for that period to a level comparable with the employee's normal position.
- Once the time period for the professional development leave is agreed upon in writing, it cannot be extended. If it is shortened, prior notice to the supervisor is required.
- The employee and supervisor agree to and understand that the position will remain open and available when the employee returns.

Both the University and the employee will contribute to retirement, social security, insurance programs and other employee benefits during the leave. Eligible employees will continue to accrue sick leave and vacation leave on a full-time basis during the professional development leave.

**Application for professional development leave shall contain:**

- an appropriate outline of the project or work to be accomplished during the leave with specification to the academic semester.
- an indication of why the applicant believes the project or work to be undertaken will improve his/her professional contribution to the Department or function of which the applicant is a part.
- a letter of endorsement from the applicant's supervisor supporting the request and noting the expected benefits to the unit of the leave.
- The employee must return to the University for at least one (1) academic year following the leave, unless other arrangements were made in writing before the leave was taken.
- An employee who does not return to the University for the time stated shall reimburse the University for the salary or other funds received during the leave.
- Employees will not be eligible for a second leave until they complete three additional years of continuous service.

**Applies to Faculty Members**

Provided funds are available, professional development leave shall be made available to faculty members who meet the following specific requirements and who are not

eligible for sabbatical leaves. Such leaves are granted to increase an employee’s value to the University through enhanced opportunities for travel, formal education, research, writing or other experience of professional value.

- All faculty with six or more years of service, except those who are serving in tenure-earning or tenured positions, shall be eligible for professional development leaves if the contract or grant they are compensated through allows for such leaves.
- The University shall select faculty applicants based on the following:
  - The Provost or provost-designee will appoint a committee that will evaluate and rank order the applications.
  - No member of the committee shall also be an applicant for a professional development leave.
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  - The committee will develop its ranking based on the specific criteria that completion of the project would improve the productivity of the Department or function of which the employee is a part.
  - No more than one (1) faculty member in a Department/unit need be granted leave at the same time.
  - If more than one (1) faculty member in a Department/unit applies for professional development leave at the same time, approval and coordination from the department chairperson must be received prior to going on leave.

**SCOPE**

This Policy applies to all benefits earning exempt staff and faculty who have been employed with the university for at least six (6) years.

**REASON FOR POLICY**

To provide exempt staff and faculty members (who are not eligible for Sabbatical Leaves) with leave opportunities to advance job-related skills and knowledge.

**DEFINITIONS**

TERM	DEFINITIONS
Employee	A person employed for wages or salary, especially at nonexecutive level.

**ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**



N/A

**RELATED RESOURCES**

N/A

**CONTACTS**

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**HISTORY**

**Initial Effective Date:** July, 2005

**Review Dates** (*review performed, no updates*): N/A

**Revision Dates** (*updates made to document*): July 26, 2024; May 7, 2025.