



University Staff (non-bargaining unit faculty and employees)

SUBJECT (R*)	EFFECTIVE DATE (R*)	POLICY NUMBER (O*)
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT LEAVE	July 2005	1710.260

POLICY STATEMENT (R*)

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.

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.
- 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 (1) 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.

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 employees with three 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.
- 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 University shall select applicants based on the following:
 - The Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs will form a committee that will evaluate and rank order the applications. The committee shall be appointed by the Provost.
 - 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) employee in a Department/unit need be granted leave at the same time.
- 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.

REASON FOR POLICY (O*)

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

RESPONSIBLE UNIVERSITY DIVISION/DEPARTMENT (R*)

Division of Human Resources
Florida International University

RESPONSIBLE ADMINISTRATIVE OVERSIGHT (R*)

Employee and Labor Relations
Florida International University
11200 S.W. Eighth Street - PC 236
Miami, Florida 33199
Telephone: (305) 348-4186

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***R = Required *O = Optional**