Operating Policy and Procedure

OP 32.15: Faculty Leave of Absence

DATE: May 4, 2016

PURPOSE: The purpose of this Operating Policy/Procedure (OP) is to ensure understanding and a standardized approach in handling faculty leaves of absence.

REVIEW: This OP will be reviewed in April of even-numbered years by the Vice Provost for Faculty Success with substantive revisions presented to the Provost and Senior Vice President (PSVP).

POLICY/PROCEDURE

1. The Board of Regents may grant faculty development leaves of absence for study, research, writing, field observations, or other suitable purposes, under conditions allowable by the state of Texas. *In accordance with Section 04.05.1, Regents’ Rules

2. Such leaves will not jeopardize a faculty member's participation in benefits available by or through the institution or the state to faculty members. *In accordance with Section 04.05.2, Regents’ Rules

3. Leave without pay will be granted for a maximum of one calendar year (effective the date the request is approved) for special situations. *In accordance with Section 661.909, Texas Government Code

   An extension of one additional year may be granted only under very unusual circumstances. Extensions beyond two years are strongly discouraged and normally not granted.

4. In making recommendations for faculty leaves to the Board of Regents, procedures for selection consistent with state guidelines will be utilized by the president. *In accordance with Section 04.05.3, Regents’ Rules

5. The following procedure is to be used for routine leaves of absence for academic purposes, ordinarily for a semester or an academic year:

   a. The individual involved requests from the department chairperson or immediate supervisor a leave of absence on the Application for Official Leave of Absence (see attachment) at least four and one-half months prior to the beginning of the requested leave period. The request should specify the applicant's rank/position, specific beginning and ending dates of the requested leave, location of the leave, whether salary arrangements are requested or the leave is without pay, and the purpose of the leave of absence.

   b. The chairperson/ supervisor's recommendation should be noted on the Application for Official Leave of Absence and forwarded to the dean.

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c. The dean should note her/his recommendation on the Application for Official Leave of Absence and forward it to the PSVP. The chairperson and dean are invited to submit other relevant information.

d. The PSVP reviews the request and approves or disapproves the leave. If approved, the leave application is prepared for submission to the president and the Board of Regents for final approval at the next available meeting of the Board. The information to the president should include at least those items named in Section 5.a above to provide appropriate data for ratification by the Board of Regents.

e. The Office of the PSVP notifies the individual involved of the decision by letter, sending copies to the president, dean, chairperson, and the Office of Institutional Research and Information Management.

f. Upon receipt of a copy of the approval of a leave of absence from the PSVP, the appropriate chairperson/supervisor initiates a Change-of-Status form to implement the activity. The Change of Status form follows routine channels to the dean and PSVP and then to the distribution printed on the Change-of-Status form.

6. Faculty development leaves for which funds are provided through the university faculty development program are processed through separate procedures. (See OP 32.29)

7. If the salary arrangements requested involve payment to the faculty member from university funds or through the university Payroll Office, the Office of the Provost will coordinate the proposed financial arrangement with the senior vice president for administration and finance prior to approval of the leave or action by the Board of Regents. Persons who are not paid from university funds or through the Payroll Office should be advised to make arrangements to pay insurance premiums so their insurance will not be cancelled.

Attachment: Application for Official Leave of Absence