Faculty Policies

Leaves of Absence

- Leave for Educational Purposes
- Annual Leave and Holidays
- Leave for Personal Reasons
- Temporary Disability Leave
- Leaves of Absence for State Employees on Military Duty
- Leave for Agency Convenience

Summary: How Leave Without Pay Affects Faculty Benefits (opens PDF)

The relevant department chair, dean, and vice president must approve leaves of absence without pay. Such leaves of absence are not granted for longer than two consecutive years, except under very unusual circumstances, if approved by the vice president.

The duration of a leave of absence counts within the probationary period of a tenure-track faculty member on a term election, unless specifically exempted in advance by the dean.

Certain faculty benefits are affected by leaves of absence without pay. Although the benefits associated with each leave type are summarized below, faculty members considering a leave without pay should consult with a counselor at the University Human Resources Benefits Division.

1. Leave for Educational Purposes

The University does not have a standard system of sabbatical leaves, but does provide a more restricted program of research assignments and leave for educational purposes as described below. "Educational purposes" are defined as activities that have as their primary purpose the acquisition of new knowledge, techniques, and experiences that are judged by the relevant department chair, dean, and academic vice president to facilitate or enhance an ability to contribute to the University.

Research is a primary mission of the University. In order to sustain it at a high level, the vice president and provost permits research assignments for full-time, resident teaching faculty of the schools that report to him. The assignment to research is granted with relief from other duties for one semester, or with half-time relief for one academic year. The assignment may be carried out at any location approved by the appropriate dean.

Research assignments are made possible by the normally budgeted resources of the University, school, and department and are not supported by large endowments. They are, therefore, limited in number and depend on the resources available. The vice president and provost is responsible for monitoring these programs.

The following kinds of research assignments programs currently exist.

A. "Sesqui" Leave

Each school of the University may administer a periodic program of academic leaves, often referred to as Sesquicentennial Associateships. These are competitive awards for which faculty become eligible after a stated duration of service since the last leave. The purpose of a Sesqui Leave is to help faculty invigorate their research and teaching activities. Normally, more faculty members apply for leaves than are available for award. Each dean maintains a written policy explaining the elements of the program including the conditions of eligibility, the criteria and mechanism of selection, the application procedure, the annual schedule of decision-making, and reporting requirements. During these leaves, the University will continue to make its contributions to retirement, health and welfare benefit plans to the extent allowable by federal and state law.

B. Other Educational Leaves
A research assignment may also originate from the deans or from the vice president and provost under special circumstances, such as to a faculty member who has contributed significantly to academic administration, to a chair holder, and for other special purposes to meet the urgent needs of a school or department. The winner of the Alumni Board of Trustees Teaching Award for tenure-track faculty members also receives a research assignment as part of that award. During Educational Leaves, the University continues to make contributions to the faculty member’s retirement plan and pays the premiums for life and disability insurance, but the faculty member must pay the full cost of health insurance if he or she wishes to remain in the UVA Health Plan.

2. Annual Leave and Holidays

Instructional faculty members employed for nine months do not receive annual leave, but observe University holidays and determine their own hours during semester breaks scheduled in the academic calendar. They do not have specific University responsibilities or duties during the summer apart from those associated with registration and the preparation of materials for the academic year. The academic calendar is set approximately two years in advance.

Annual leave is available to other faculty members who hold full-time appointments of a year or longer. Annual leave for faculty is granted in accordance with the following schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contractual Cycle</th>
<th>Annual Leave Available</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12-month contractual</td>
<td>22 working days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-month contractual</td>
<td>20 working days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-month contractual</td>
<td>18 working days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09-month contractual</td>
<td>16 working days</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Part-time faculty are eligible for leave proportionate to working time. Annual leave need not be taken all at once but may be distributed throughout the year at the faculty member’s option with the concurrence of the supervisor.

Any unused annual leave lapses at the end of each fiscal year and may not be accumulated. There is no compensation made for any unused leave at the time of separation from University employment, or in the event that a faculty member transfers to the classified employment system. Responsibility for record-keeping of annual leave for members of the faculty lies with the departments.

University holidays are scheduled throughout the year so as to least disrupt the academic calendar. Inside UVA publishes the holiday schedule in July and publicizes each holiday as it occurs throughout the year.

If the academic calendar schedules classes on a holiday, Labor Day for example, faculty members do not observe this holiday. Other employees are permitted an alternative if their services are required on a holiday.

3. Leave for Personal Reasons

Policies regarding leave for personal reasons apply to (a) faculty on continuing contract (members of the tenured and tenure-track and general faculties who hold ongoing contracts of one year or more); and (b) other University faculty members who have been employed for at least twelve months by the University or another agency of the Commonwealth and have been employed within the last twelve months on more than a half-time basis.

A. Family and Medical Leave Act

By federal law, faculty members who have been with the University at least 12 months and worked at least 1,250 hours during the 12 months before the start of the leave are entitled to unpaid family or medical leave because of the birth of a child or the placement of a child with the employee for adoption or foster care, because the employee is needed to care for a family member (child, spouse, or parent) with a serious health condition, or because the employee's own serious health condition makes him/her unable to do his/her job. This unpaid leave will run concurrently with other paid and unpaid leave permitted for the above-described reasons, including but not limited to Modified Service Leave, Family Leave, and Adoption Leave.

If at the birth or placement of a child both parents are employees of the University, FMLA leave for both employees may be limited to a combined total of twelve weeks.

B. Modified Service Leave

A Modified Service Leave of up to one semester for teaching faculty or six months for administrative or non-teaching faculty will be granted on request to the primary caretaker of one's child, spouse, or other disabled or elderly adult. During this period, salary will be prorated to amount worked, with the restriction that the modified
service must involve no less than a 50% work commitment. Allowable fringe benefits will continue with the retirement benefits being prorated as permitted by the individual faculty member's retirement plan to the percentage of effort worked. The faculty member will be responsible for both the employer and the employee portions of the UVA Health Plan premium.

C. Family Leave

Leave without pay but with the continuation of allowable fringe benefits may be granted for a period not to exceed one year when circumstances in a faculty member's family, such as a need for additional maternity or extended parental leave or to serve as primary caretaker for a disabled or elderly adult, make it difficult for the faculty member to carry out assigned duties. Participation in the UVA Health Plan will be permitted for only six months, and the faculty member must pay both the employer and the employee cost. Modified Service Leave and Family Leave combined should not exceed one year for the same incident.

Tenure-track faculty members may request that Modified Service and Family Leave not be counted as part of the probationary period.

D. Adoption/Foster Care Leave

If a child is placed with an employee for adoption or foster care, unpaid leave of no more than twelve weeks shall be granted, to be taken within twelve months of the date of placement. If the child placed is under seven years of age, the first three weeks shall be leave with full pay and all allowable fringe benefits. During the remaining nine weeks of the leave, the University will pay no salary but will contribute the employer's portion of any allowable health and life insurance premiums, so long as the employee continues to pay his or her premium portion.

E. Invalid Visa Leave

In the event that a faculty member's visa expires or becomes otherwise invalid, the department may allow the faculty member to be placed on a temporary leave without pay. The University will continue to pay life and disability premiums on behalf of a faculty member placed on Invalid Visa Leave. Such a faculty member is eligible to continue participation in the UVA Health Plan, but must pay both employer and employee premiums.

F. Personal Leave

At the discretion of the department, faculty members are also entitled to up to 24 months of Personal Leave for reasons other than those discussed elsewhere in this document. The University will continue to provide life and disability insurance for up to 24 months of Personal Leave without pay, but will provide only six months of health insurance for which the faculty member must pay both the employer and the employee contribution.

4. Temporary Disability Leave

A. For faculty in the Defined Contribution Retirement Plan for the General Faculty of the University of Virginia (FRP)

Temporary disability leave (sick leave) with 100 percent salary and all fringe benefits (if the employee normally receives such benefits) is available to (a) members of the general faculty on continuing contracts (members of the tenured and tenure-track and general faculties who hold ongoing contracts of one year or more); and (b) other University faculty members who have been employed for at least twelve months by the University or another agency of the Commonwealth and have been employed within the last twelve months on more than a half-time basis. Up to six months of leave (or to the end of the contract, whichever comes first) is available for the period of temporary disability caused by accident, ill health, pregnancy, or childbirth and the recovery therefrom. At the discretion of the supervisor, a physician's verification of temporary disability may be required. For childbirth-related absences, an absence of six weeks or less will not require a physician's verification.

There is no compensation made for any unused leave at the time of separation from University employment or transfer to the classified system.

In an instance when a disability exists longer than the six months of sick leave, application may be made to receive benefits through long-term disability coverage. Determination of eligibility for benefits is made by the insurance carrier in conjunction with the faculty member's physician. Detailed information regarding plan provisions may be found at www.hrs.virginia.edu/facben.html, or from a counselor at the UHR Benefits Division.

A faculty member whose long-term disability claim has been approved will be eligible for continued employer
contributions to life, health, and retirement plans for a period of 12 months from the claim approval date. After the expiration of the 12 months, known as “Ill Health Leave,” these benefits will continue subject to the terms of the long-term disability policy and the faculty member’s continued payment of premiums.

B. For faculty members who participate in the Virginia Retirement System (VRS) and the Virginia Sickness and Disability Program (VSDP)

Effective each January 10, full-time faculty members who participate in the VRS and VSDP receive 8 to 10 days of sick leave annually depending on the number of months of State service. Part-time faculty members who are in VRS and VSDP earn up to five days of sick leave annually depending on months of service. In addition to sick leave, faculty members will also receive up to five days of a new leave category called “Family and Personal Leave.”

For temporary disabilities of greater duration, the VSDP provides income replacement after a seven calendar day waiting period. Benefits are available based on months of service according to the following schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Months of Service</th>
<th>100%</th>
<th>80%</th>
<th>60%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 60</td>
<td>5 days (40 hrs.)</td>
<td>20 days (160 hrs.)</td>
<td>100 days (800 hrs.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-119</td>
<td>25 days (200 hrs.)</td>
<td>25 days (200 hrs.)</td>
<td>75 days (600 hrs.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>120-179</td>
<td>25 days (200 hrs.)</td>
<td>50 days (400 hrs.)</td>
<td>50 days (400 hrs.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>180 or more</td>
<td>25 days (200 hrs.)</td>
<td>75 days (600 hrs.)</td>
<td>25 days (200 hrs.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Long-term disability coverage is provided after an employee completes the short-term disability period (six months). If approved for long-term disability, 60 percent of income is paid until age 65 or until the disability no longer exists. If the disability began after age 60, the benefit period is five years.

C. For faculty members who are in the Virginia Retirement System (VRS) but NOT in the Virginia Sickness and Disability Program (VSDP)

Temporary disability leave (sick leave) with 100% salary and all fringe benefits (if the employee normally receives such benefits) is available to (a) members of the general faculty on continuing contracts (members of the tenured and tenure-track and general faculties who hold ongoing contracts of one year or more); and (b) other University faculty members who have been employed for at least twelve months by the University or another agency of the Commonwealth and have been employed within the last twelve months on more than a half-time basis. Up to six months of leave (or to the end of the contract, whichever comes first) is available for the period of temporary disability caused by accident, ill health, pregnancy, or childbirth and the recovery there from. At the discretion of the supervisor, a physician’s verification of temporary disability may be required. For childbirth-related absences, an absence of six weeks or less will not require a physician’s verification.

There is no compensation made for any unused leave at the time of separation from University employment or transfer to the classified system.

In an instance when a disability lasts longer than the six months of sick leave and is likely to be permanent, the faculty member could apply for a VRS Disability Retirement. Otherwise, no further income replacement benefits are available.

5. Leaves of Absence for State Employees on Military Duty

Faculty called to military duty should be placed on leave without pay by the department. If the faculty member is a twelve-month employee, the individual may use up to twenty-two days of annual leave before being moved to a non-pay status. Paid leaves of absence, which are limited to fifteen working days per federal fiscal year, have now been defined to include training time.

Although health insurance is not available for faculty members on leave without pay for military duty, the faculty member and his or her dependents can enroll in COBRA continuation coverage for up to 18 months. In the event that the faculty member was called to active service, the University will pay its contribution toward continuation coverage, and the usual COBRA administrative fee will be waived. Employer-provided life insurance will be continued for 24 months of unpaid military leave, but disability and optional coverage will be discontinued.

6. Leave for Agency Convenience

In the event that the University finds it necessary to furlough a faculty member for up to four months, the faculty member will
be placed on Leave for Agency Convenience, and will continue to receive full benefits. Leave for Agency Convenience can also be used if necessary to convert a faculty member from a 12-month appointment that ends at the end of an academic year to a 9-month appointment that begins the following academic year.

E-mail comments to: cpl3b@virginia.edu
Last Modified: Friday, 17-Feb-2006 16:42:12 EST
© Copyright 2006 by the Rector and Visitors of the University of Virginia