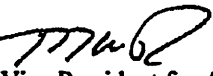




MEMORANDUM

To: Academic Deans
From: Michael W. Quick 
Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs
Date: December 18, 2017
Subject: Sabbatical Guidelines

Sabbaticals are critical to promoting academic excellence and scholarly achievement through faculty growth and development. They are awarded to faculty based on a well-defined program of research, study, or creative production. Faculty who usually hold both scholarly and teaching responsibilities are periodically relieved of teaching duties to have the opportunity to be more productive in scholarship or creative activity, or in study that will lead to such productivity.

These guidelines incorporate the policy as published in Faculty Handbook 3-E (2), and supersede the 1998 guidance issued by then Provost Armstrong.

1. Approval

Requests for sabbatical leaves originate with the eligible faculty member for review and endorsement of the dean. Some schools use faculty committees to advise the dean.

Final approval of each sabbatical rests with the Provost. Under current practice, this authority has been delegated to the Vice Provost for Academic and Faculty Affairs.

If there is an appeal as to the grant or denial of a sabbatical or other research leave, the Committee on Deadlines and Leaves provides its review and recommendations to the Provost.

2. Requirements

Deans should take into consideration the following requirements when making recommendations to the Provost:

- A definite and well-defined research or study program must be submitted for approval. A candidate should indicate what the prospects of completion of the project will be.
- A faculty member on sabbatical leave should not engage in other activities for remuneration that would intrude on his or her sabbatical research. The request for approval should state what paid activities will be undertaken.
- A faculty member on sabbatical may continue grant-funded research, but may not engage in compensated teaching, neither at USC nor elsewhere, except with written advance approval of the Provost.

- The absence of a faculty member should not jeopardize the academic program of his or her department.
- The faculty member is expected to return to the University for at least one year after the sabbatical. If not, the faculty member is expected to repay the University the amount of salary received during the sabbatical period.
- A final report shall be provided to the dean upon the faculty member's return.

3. Timing and Amount of Pay

Sabbatical leave will be allowed, if approved, for:

- One semester on full salary after 6 years (12 semesters) of full-time USC service (sometimes called a "full sabbatical"), or
- One academic (or calendar) year on half salary after 6 years of full-time USC service (often used for "fellowship sabbaticals"), or
- One semester at half salary after 6 semesters of full-time USC service (sometimes called "mini-sabbaticals").

Sabbaticals for a full academic year should be taken over consecutive academic periods (e.g., fall and spring semesters of a given academic year, or spring semester and fall semester of one calendar year, but not fall of one academic year and fall or spring of the following academic year.)

Sabbatical leaves are to be taken immediately following the period of service to which the leave relates. After accruing 12 semesters of full-time service, accrual of additional semesters toward sabbatical eligibility stops until the faculty member returns from an approved sabbatical. In other words, the clock stops at 12 semesters and restarts upon return from a mini or full sabbatical. Sabbaticals may not be accumulated, (e.g., after 12 years' service, the faculty member may not take two semester sabbaticals at full pay or two year-long sabbaticals at half pay.) The exception for faculty on contractual administrative appointments with Provost approval is explained below.

If the dean recommends a sabbatical based on an exceptional situation, the Provost may approve, based on merit, a more frequent sabbatical leave or more than half salary. Such approvals are rare.

(a) Deferred Sabbaticals

Exceptional timing—advancing or deferring a sabbatical from the normal period—requires written Provost's approval in advance. A department may recommend to the dean exceptions to the usual timing (1) to facilitate the faculty member's research or study during the sabbatical or (2) to meet the needs of the department, school, or the University.

Such exceptions require endorsement by the responsible dean prior to the time of normal sabbatical eligibility. Documentation of that endorsement should be included with the request for a delayed or out-of-cycle sabbatical leave when the request is submitted for Provost approval. Deferred sabbaticals with advance approval of the Provost may be charged to the usual sabbatical pool available at the time the leave is taken.

Using such an exception with advance approval of the Provost does not affect the calculation of the period of service to which the leave relates. Thus, if the department or dean requests that an individual take a sabbatical a year late, the accrual of eligibility for the next semester remains the same as if the sabbatical

had been taken at the normal time. All personnel records should accurately reflect the semester of eligibility as well as the semester(s) in which the sabbatical is actually taken. The attached "Table of Sabbatical Types and Timing of Sabbatical Leave" provides examples of how the calculation is made. References to delayed sabbaticals in that chart refer only to delays with prior written approval of the Provost. If a faculty member postpones a sabbatical without prior written approval, the chart does not apply and additional semesters of service may not accrue to future sabbatical eligibility.

(b) Sabbaticals One Semester Early

If normal sabbatical eligibility falls in the spring semester of the academic year, a department's request that the sabbatical be taken (or a year-long sabbatical started) one semester early during the fall of the same academic year may be endorsed by the dean on the same basis as late sabbaticals. It is rare that a sabbatical will be approved in an academic year earlier than normal eligibility; if there is a special, well-documented need, the dean must request explicit advance approval of the Provost. If the Provost approves an early sabbatical, the count for the next semester of eligibility remains the same as if the sabbatical had been taken on schedule; the approved early sabbatical may be charged to the usual sabbatical pool for the year in which the sabbatical is taken. It is expected that the faculty member will return to the University for at least one year after a sabbatical leave; if the sabbatical is taken early, then it is expected that the faculty member will return to full-time service at the University for a period extending through the year after normal eligibility.

(c) Recognition of Sabbatical Eligibility for New Faculty Hires

In general, only USC full-time tenured or tenure-track service is counted for sabbatical eligibility. However, in the case of newly appointed faculty members who have prior service in a full-time tenured or tenure-track position at another institution of higher education, his or her next year of sabbatical eligibility may be the same as if he or she had continued at the prior institution, should the dean agree during negotiations, as necessary. In such cases, the sabbatical eligibility date and semesters of accrued service should be noted in the offer letter for Provost approval. Sabbaticals taken on the approved schedule may be charged to the usual sabbatical pool.

(d) Probationary Faculty

Probationary faculty on the tenure track are eligible for sabbatical after the grant of tenure, not during the probationary period. Such faculty accrue eligibility for sabbatical leave during each semester of full-time service prior to the tenure decision. If a school has an extended tenure calendar, or the Provost has approved an individual delay of the tenure decision, semesters of full-time service accrued by tenure-track faculty in excess of the 12 semesters that are required for a semester sabbatical at full pay are credited toward the next sabbatical. (For example, if 14 semesters of full-time service are accrued while on the tenure track, 2 semesters are credited toward the second sabbatical when the sabbatical clock resets upon return from the first sabbatical leave. The second sabbatical is calculated as if the first one were taken after 12 semesters.)

4. Special Situations

(a) ASHSS Sabbaticals

Through a competitive application process, both tenured and RTPC faculty in the arts, humanities, and humanistic social sciences at the rank of full or associate professor can apply for an ASHSS sabbatical. Applicants must have accrued a minimum of six semesters since their last sabbatical or, for RTPC faculty, have served a minimum of three uninterrupted years of full-time service. Successful applications will present a viable and realistic plan to produce leading work, a compelling case for why the

ASHSS sabbatical, or paid leave for RTPC faculty, is critical at this moment in the research process, and how the ASHSS sabbatical will accelerate scholarly output. Preference will be given to full professors who already have a proven track record of high-quality productivity.

(b) Faculty with Contractual Administrative Appointments

Faculty with approved and documented administrative appointments continue to accrue eligibility for sabbaticals and school-paid leaves during the term of that appointment; the limits on accrual and accumulation mentioned in Section 3 are waived. On request of the dean sabbaticals and leaves may be postponed for as long as the administrative appointment lasts, up to a three-year assignment. Longer postponements due to administrative assignment require Provost approval. At the time such faculty do take sabbatical leave, the faculty core portion of compensation may be charged to the usual sabbatical pool.

(c) Faculty on Twelve-Month Contracts

For faculty on fiscal year contracts requiring 12 months' work annually, sabbaticals may be granted for periods of 6 months at full pay (including one-half month vacation) or 12 months at half pay (including 1 month vacation).

5. Merit Increases and Benefits

Faculty members on sabbatical leaves should receive the same merit increase for the period as if they were not on sabbatical.

Benefits shall continue during the paid sabbatical.

6. School-Paid Leaves

In the past both leaves paid out of the sabbatical pool as well as leaves paid from general school resources were referred to as "sabbaticals" in Faculty Handbook 4-C (2)(b) and in individual Provost approvals. However, the current practice, to avoid confusion, is that leaves funded out of general school resources should be classified as "research leave," (or "school-paid leave," "study leave," "professional leave," or the like).

Research leaves may be awarded by a school on an individual basis to both tenured and RTPC faculty without consideration of the normal sabbatical timing.

For schools employing the practice that research leaves regularly top-up mini-sabbaticals to be full pay for one semester, the combination should be labeled "mini-sabbatical and school-paid leave"; schools with the practice of adding a semester research leave on to regular sabbaticals (one semester at full pay) to amount to full pay for a year should label each semester appropriately. Accrual and accumulation of such leaves are limited by the rules governing the sabbaticals to which they are top-ups or add-ons. Any semester during which a full sabbatical, annual sabbatical, or mini-sabbatical is taken will not accrue toward future sabbatical eligibility.

Some schools have the practice of granting a research leave to probationary faculty following a successful third-year review; such leaves should be classified as school-paid leaves.

7. **Sabbatical Pool Funds**

Deans should submit with their annual budget requests a list of those faculty members expected to be on sabbatical in the following year and the amount needed to cover the sabbaticals. If the sabbatical pool has sufficient funds, the full amount of sabbatical payment may be charged to the pool. If there are insufficient funds, there will be a cap in the amount chargeable to the pool, and the school may either make up the difference from other resources or place limits on the number of sabbaticals endorsed, selecting those proposals best serving the purposes of the sabbatical policy. Funds from the sabbatical pool may only be used for compensation of individuals with Provost-approved sabbaticals.

Attachments: Table of Sabbatical Types and Timing of Sabbatical Leave

Cc: C. L. Max Nikias
Academic Senate
President's Cabinet
Provost's Cabinet