

FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY
SABBATICAL LEAVE APPLICATION GUIDELINES FOR
LEAVES DURING THE 2025-2026 ACADEMIC YEAR

Timeline and Deadlines

The dates and steps of the review process are as follows:

1. Prior to **October 15**: The member shall consult with his/her department head/chair as he/she develops their Sabbatical Leave plan to be certain that the proposal is consistent with the goals and objectives of the unit.
2. On or before **October 15**: The member shall submit his/her application materials to the college/unit Sabbatical Review Committee and to the department head. The college/unit Sabbatical Review Committee shall inform the applicant of an incomplete application and the applicant shall have until November 1 to resubmit the application.
3. On or before **November 15**: The college/unit Sabbatical Review Committee and the department head independently review and evaluate the applications on the basis of the fulfillment of the purposes and eligibility for a sabbatical leave as listed in Sections 10.4A and 10.4B of the current FSU/FFA, MEA-NEA agreement. The committee and the department head may choose to not recommend an application on the basis of a lack of completeness or on the merit of the application relative to Section 10.4A. The committee and the department head then independently forward to the Dean a rank-ordered list of recommended applications and an unranked list of non-recommended applications. A written explanation for each non-recommended application shall also be forwarded to the Dean.
4. On or before **December 1**: The Dean reviews and evaluates the ranked and unranked applications and forwards both the ranked and unranked applications and the ranked and the unranked lists with comments as received from the college/unit Sabbatical Review Committee. Additional comments may be added concerning any Application. All materials will then be sent to the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs Who shall convene the University Sabbatical Review Committee and forward all college/unit rank ordered, recommended applications to this committee.
5. On or before **January 15**: The University Sabbatical Review Committee reviews and evaluates the applications. The committee then creates a single rank-ordered list from the rank-ordered college/unit recommended lists while maintaining the individual college/unit Sabbatical Leave Committees' rank-order. The committee shall forward these evaluations and a rank-ordered list to the Provost/VPAA.

6. On or before **April 1**: The Provost/VPAA reviews and evaluates all recommended, rank-ordered applications received from the University Sabbatical Review Committee and all non-ranked, non-recommended applications received from the individual Deans and college/unit Sabbatical Review Committee. Following a discussion with the University Sabbatical Review Committee, the Provost/VPAA may delete any ranked application and/or add to the bottom of the rank-ordered list any non-recommended application. The Provost/VPAA forwards a list of Provost/VPAA approved applications in a rank order to the Board of Trustees for official action and funding. The Provost/VPAA shall notify all applicants as to the approval or rejection of their Sabbatical Leave Requests and the final disposition of their Sabbatical Leave Requests: Provost/VPAA approved and funded, Provost/VPAA approved but not funded, or Provost/VPAA not approved. All applications that are not approved or not funded must receive from the Provost/VPAA an explanation which shall include specific suggestions for an improved application.

Purpose and Eligibility

A. Purpose: Sabbatical Leave is to encourage members to pursue special studies, investigations, and research that will contribute to their professional development and competence. Sabbatical Leaves are granted for special study, research, and/or other projects that will enhance the usefulness of the person to the institution; perform service on the local, state, national, or international level; and/or bring prestige to the university. Endeavors appropriate for consideration are below:

- **Community Service:** Faculty may use the leave to help develop programs at the local, state, national, or international level. For example, a faculty member's expertise might be used in evaluating and improving existing programs, training personnel in such programs, serving in professional organizations, editing professional journals, or organizing professional meetings, provided that the time and effort required by the project justify the extended time and release from duties afforded by a Sabbatical Leave.
- **Professional Development:** Faculty may increase their skills and effectiveness as teachers, researchers, or creative professionals, or enhance their usefulness to FSU by developing a new specialty, strengthening a current specialty, or continuing their formal education. The Sabbatical Leave may be used to pursue a self-designed, structured program of individual study; participate in specialized programs; work with recognized leaders in the field; or pursue graduate, professional, or postdoctoral study, including work that is part of a relevant graduate degree program.
- **Program Development:** The Sabbatical Leave may be used to develop new teaching techniques; to collect materials for new programs; to develop new ways of presenting material; to develop new curricula for implementation at FSU; to establish linkages between FSU programs and other organizations, agencies, or institutions; or to survey what is being done at other institutions as models for programs at FSU.

- **Research, Artistic, and Creative Activities:** The Sabbatical Leave may be used to pursue a variety of pure or applied scholarly projects that may be interdisciplinary or focused within a discipline or area of specialization. Appropriate projects include creation, studies, or critiques of works of art or artistic performances; investigations undertaken to establish facts, principles, and techniques within a discipline; application of the principles and techniques of one discipline to the problems of another; the systematic collection, analysis, and interpretation of data to address a theoretical or practical problem; and preparation of books, articles, lectures, exhibitions, or performances that illuminate interdisciplinary connections or make theories, issues, or methods of the faculty member's discipline or specialty accessible to wider audiences.

B. Eligibility: A member may apply for Sabbatical Leave after the completion of ten (10) semesters of continuous employment, excluding summer. The Sabbatical Leave may take place any time following the completion of the twelfth semester of continuous employment, excluding summer.

A recipient of a Sabbatical Leave is eligible for a subsequent Sabbatical Leave only after again fulfilling all of the above requirements, with time of employment being calculated from the date of return from the previous sabbatical.

Duration, Commitment, and Compensation

C. Duration: The duration of Sabbatical Leave shall be determined by the validity of the request and the needs and resources of FSU. Sabbatical Leaves may be granted for one (1) or two (2) semesters or twelve (12) consecutive months but shall not exceed the period of time for which the applicant is regularly appointed. Under special circumstances, determined by the needs of the applicant and the interests of FSU, a Sabbatical Leave of two (2) or more nonconsecutive semesters may be granted so long as the total period on leave does not exceed the period of time for which the applicant is regularly appointed.

D. Commitment to Return and Termination: Before a Sabbatical Leave is granted, the recipient must execute a written agreement that in the event (s)he fails to return to employment at FSU at the expiration of such leave and render services for a period of at least one (1) year thereafter in the same capacity as when the leave started, the member will reimburse FSU for all sums paid by FSU while on leave. The sums paid by FSU may be withheld by the University from sums owed to the recipient, if any.

- **Termination:** A Sabbatical Leave may be terminated before its expiration date upon mutual agreement between the recipient and FSU.

E. Compensation and Benefits: Compensation will be at full regular salary for leaves of one semester and two-thirds (2/3) of regular salary for leaves longer than one (1) semester and shall be paid according to University payroll procedures.

- Sabbatical Leave is full-time service for the purposes of computing length of service, salary, promotions, assignments, sick leave, insurance, retirement, and other benefits accruing to full-time service for which they would normally be eligible were they not on approved leave.

Deviation Policy and Final Report

F. Deviation from Approved Plan: In the event that any of the proposed/approved sabbatical leave activities change, the member shall immediately notify in writing the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs describing the proposed changes to the Sabbatical Leave plan. The Provost/VPAA will determine the appropriateness of these revisions and approve or disapprove the modifications to the plan. If disapproved and no other alternative modification to the original plan can be identified, and approved by the Provost/VPAA the leave shall be cancelled effective the date of that decision. The decision of the Provost/VPAA is final, binding, and not subject to arbitration.

G. Sabbatical Final Report: On or before the end of the first semester following the sabbatical leave, recipients shall prepare a final report detailing the sabbatical leave activities as outlined below.

- **Sabbatical Final Report Guidelines**
 - Cover Page (including the text “Sabbatical Final Report”, Title of Sabbatical, Semester(s)/Year of Sabbatical, Faculty Name, Position Title, Department Name, College Name)
 - Detailed description of work completed on sabbatical (approx. 500-750 words)
 - Timeline of actual work completed (weekly/monthly)
 - Deviation from proposed sabbatical (if applicable)
 - List of publications or presentations (completed, submitted, or scheduled) as a result of the sabbatical (if applicable).
 - List of any conferences, courses, symposiums, or seminars attended during the sabbatical (if applicable).
 - Plans for future work in this area of focus.
 - Impact the sabbatical has had on your professional development.
 - Impact the sabbatical has had on your college and Ferris State University.
 - Suggestions to Improve the Sabbatical Process (anything from application to completion)

Please email the completed final report to the following individuals/department:

- Your department head/chair.
- The college/unit sabbatical review committee (via the committee chair).
- The university sabbatical review committee (via the university sabbatical review chair).
- The FLITE/University Archivist and the Dean of FLITE (library)

The college/unit Sabbatical Review Committee and the department head/chair will review and evaluate the final report and forward the report with evaluation to the Dean. The Dean will review and forward the report to the President via the VPAA. One copy of the report, with all attached evaluations and comments (as well as any submitted rebuttal) shall be retained in the recipient's personnel file.

The written report, with all evaluative comments, shall be available to all evaluating and/or decision-making personnel for purposes of subsequent Sabbatical Leaves, promotions, and/or merit determinations.

(Example Cover Page)

Sabbatical Final Report

Title of Sabbatical

Semester(s) Year

Name of Faculty

Position Title

Name of Department

Name of College