



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY

Operating Policy and Procedure

OP 32.15: Faculty Leave of Absence

DATE: December 22, 2023

PURPOSE: The purpose of this Operating Policy/Procedure (OP) is to ensure understanding and a standardized approach in handling faculty leaves of absence that are not handled under [OP 32.29, Faculty Development Leaves](#).

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. Faculty leave of absence: This term is specific to a leave taken in order for the faculty member to pursue a professional opportunity that is related to research, creative activity, teaching, service, and/or engaged scholarship and aligned with the faculty member's position at Texas Tech University. Employee leave, which includes items such as sick leave and family medical leave, is described in [OP 70.01, Employee Leave](#).

Faculty leaves of absence may be granted when a faculty member proposes to pursue a professional opportunity that is not supported by a faculty development leave, per [OP 32.29, Faculty Development Leaves](#).

2. Faculty leaves of absence are generally considered leaves without pay due to the nature of the activity undertaken during the leave. Faculty leaves of absence without pay normally would be for one semester or two consecutive semesters. 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.

3. 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), preferably at least four and one-half months prior to the beginning of the requested leave period. Failure to submit the *Application for Official Leave of Absence* with at least four and one-half months' notice could result in the application being denied due to lack of a unit's ability to cover the faculty member's absence. The request should specify the applicant's rank/position, specific beginning and ending dates of the requested leave, location of the leave, purpose of the leave, and the benefit of the leave to the individual and the institution.

- b. The chairperson/supervisor's recommendation should be noted on the *Application for Official Leave of Absence* and forwarded to the dean.
 - 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 3.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 Institutional Research.
 - 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.
4. Faculty development leaves for which funds are provided through the university faculty development program are processed through separate procedures (see [OP 32.29, Faculty Development Leaves](#)).
 5. A faculty member requesting a leave of absence in combination with the retention of some percentage of employment during the period of leave must contact the Vice Provost for Faculty Success.
 6. Persons who are not paid from university funds or through the Payroll & Tax Services Office should be advised to make arrangements to pay insurance premiums so their insurance will not be canceled.

[Attachment: *Application for Official Leave of Absence*](#)