

Policy on Sabbatical Leave

Date: February 24, 2016 **Policy ID:** ENG-Fac-003

Status: Final

Date Reviewed: June 16, 2025

Contact Office: Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs

engrdean@virginia.edu

Executive: Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs

Applies to:

Faculty in the School of Engineering and Applied Science.

Reason for Policy

This policy supplements the Provost's guidelines on sabbatical leave described in http://uvapolicy.virginia.edu/policy/HRM-038#sabbatical_Leave and applies specifically to faculty in SEAS.

Policy Statement:

Opportunities for faculty to spend a period of time in concentrated and uninterrupted scholarly work are essential to maintaining a vital faculty. This time may involve developing new areas of research, collaborations with colleagues at other universities or laboratories or in industry, or other scholarly pursuits. It is the policy of the School of Engineering and Applied Science to encourage faculty to avail themselves of prestigious scholarly opportunities.

SEAS faculty of professorial rank are invited to apply for sabbatical leave. Only highly meritorious proposals will be approved. Sabbatical leave can be taken as often as every seven years of full-time salaried employment in SEAS, comparable to programs at most top universities. In addition, assistant professors proposing a unique and compelling scholarly opportunity may also qualify for a first one-semester sabbatical leave after the first (three-year) contract renewal, thereafter on a seven-year cycle.

The application for a sabbatical leave should contain a proposal of the scholarly activity to be pursued and information pertaining to previous scholarly leaves. Scholarly activity is defined here in its broadest sense, i.e., as the generation and dissemination of knowledge. The proposal need not be long, but it should be comprehensive. It should address the character of the work, its impact on the future scholarly work of the candidate, the possible broadening or exposure to new ideas and advances, and anticipated travel to or residency at other institutions. The proposal should make clear the timing and term of the request. Sabbatical leave may be one semester at full pay or two semesters at half pay -- where possible, alternate times should be indicated. It

should be noted that faculty are not eligible for the SEAS Faculty Research Incentive Plan while on sabbatical leave.

Sabbatical proposals will be reviewed, prioritized, and recommended by the candidate's department. It is to be emphasized that the award of a sabbatical leave is based upon the merit of the work proposed, and departments should present (and may be called upon to substantiate) only highly meritorious cases.

Priority and timing are to be determined by the department and the candidates. Sabbatical leaves are internally funded and other faculty or visitors must cover departmental (including school-wide) teaching responsibilities. The department's recommendation should address coverage of these responsibilities. In particular, if the candidate is supported on external funds, as is typically the case for research professors, a detailed plan on how the department plans to cover the faculty salary is required. All recommendations of this committee will be subject to review and final approval by the dean.

Any faculty member who accepts a sabbatical leave is required to return to full-time work at the University of Virginia for at least two semesters at the completion of the sabbatical leave. Should a faculty member fail to return for a full year, he/she will be liable to repay the salary and benefits paid by SEAS during the sabbatical leave. Within three months of the termination of the sabbatical leave, the faculty member is expected to submit a final report to the Dean. This report should include a description of the research conducted, including a list of publications resulting from the leave. Chairs are responsible for ensuring these sabbatical reports are submitted. No new requests will be reviewed for a department if there are overdue reports from faculty with primary appointments in that department.

Administrative Assumptions:

1. It is not expected that departments will have exactly the same number of faculty on sabbatical leave during all semesters or academic years. It is expected, however, that departments will develop their recommendations so that their requests over a 7-year cycle balance out.
2. Individuals should not expect to have a sabbatical leave any more often than 1 in 7 years.
3. Departments will take primary responsibility for establishing priorities and making decisions about which people and research proposals to put forward.
4. Departments will be expected to justify their recommendations based on (a) the merit of the proposal in question and (b) the demonstrated productivity of the faculty member making the proposal.
5. Productivity is presumed to include teaching and administration as well as research and publication.
6. Except for research professors, no additional resources will be provided to departments for faculty on sabbatical leave. For research professors, the

same proportion of salary will be covered by the Dean's office as is typically used for overhead costs.

7. Sabbatical proposals submitted from departments will be considered on a rolling basis. Proposals must be submitted no later than the first day of the semester immediately preceding the semester in which the sabbatical will begin. For example, if a sabbatical is slated to begin in the Fall 2025 semester, the proposal must be received by January 13, 2025, the first day of the Spring 2025 semester.