



SCHOOL OF EDUCATION STUDY-RESEARCH LEAVE POLICY

A. Purpose:

The Virginia Commonwealth University School of Education's Study-Research Leave policy is intended to enrich faculty professional and scholarly development, critical elements in maintaining a vibrant and productive university. The Study-Research Leave is broadly designed to refresh, invigorate, and renew intellectual work and contributions of individual faculty. The leave is an opportunity for faculty to engage in projects that could not be accomplished under the typical workload. Ultimately, Study-Research Leave may result in a broad range of creative activities and/or products related to the faculty member's academic discipline and the goals of the Department, School, and University.

B. Duration:

Typically, faculty members meeting the criteria are eligible to apply for a maximum of one contract year for leave at one-half of their regular full-time salary or one-half contract year at full salary. Departments and faculty members may support the remainder of the salary (up to but not exceeding full pay) from non-state or external sources.

C. Procedures:

1. Eligibility for Study-Research Leave. The faculty member must be tenured with six years of prior University service. If a previous Study-Research Leave was granted, faculty must complete an additional six years of service before reapplying.
2. Return Commitments with Study-Research Leave.

There must be a written commitment to return to the University and serve a period of employment equal to twice the period of the leave. If the return-to-work commitment is not honored, the individual must reimburse to the University the salary received during the leave period, plus interest, regardless of the source of funds (E&G, grant, external, etc.). The faculty member and the dean must complete a Study-Research Leave Agreement and Promissory Note (http://www.hr.vcu.edu/media/hr/documents/Study_Research_Leave_For_m.doc) at least thirty days prior to the scheduled leave. The leave is not authorized until all signatures have been obtained on the promissory note.
3. Application for Study-Research Leave and Review.
 - a. The faculty member must submit a 3 page single-spaced application for a Study-Research Leave to the department chair by September 15 for a Study-Research Leave the following fall; February 15 for leave the following spring. The written request will describe the proposed leave

activity with respect to the following criteria: purpose, significance, short- and long-term outcomes. Further, faculty should specify how the Study-Research Leave will benefit the faculty member, Department, School and University and the nature and scope of the written report that is to be submitted to the Dean within three months of return from leave. A current CV is to be attached to the application.

- b. The department chair shall forward each faculty Study-Research Leave application to the President of the School of Education Faculty Organization by October 1 for leave the following fall; March 1 for leave the following Spring. The President and Associate Dean for Research and Faculty Development will convene tenured faculty representatives selected by each department (the committee) to review the merits of the application. Each application will be scored independently using a rubric that reflects the application criteria listed on the application (see 3.a.) The committee will meet to discuss their evaluations, determine the final score of each application, and forward the entire list to the relevant chair of each applicant. The committee will indicate which applications they deem meritorious.
- c. The department chair will add his/her recommendation to the relevant application and forward the faculty committee list, his/her recommendations, and the faculty application to the Dean by November 1 for leave the following fall; April 1 for leave the following Spring. In evaluating the request, the department chair should also consider the effect of the faculty member's absence on the Department/School. If the request is endorsed, then the chair must indicate how the faculty member's responsibilities (e.g., teaching, advising, administrative activities), will be covered by the Department, and if other resources are needed. If the department chair does not endorse the request, then he/she should explain why and forward to the Dean. In the event of multiple applications from the same department are deemed meritorious, the department chair will rank order the applications according to merit. If applications are judged to be equally meritorious, the chair will negotiate the timing of leave with faculty members. The department chair, in consultation with eligible faculty, will recommend to the Dean a leave schedule that accommodates multiple meritorious applications and departmental needs. The Dean will review the applications and recommendations and will make his/her recommendation to the Provost by December 1 for leave the following fall; March 1 for leave the following Spring.
- d. The merits of the proposed Study-Research Leave will be judged and other determining priorities reviewed with the relevant department chair prior to preliminary approval by the Dean of the School of Education. The appropriate vice president or designee makes the final decision.

D. Benefits While on Study-Research Leave:

1. In order to obtain consistent benefit information and assistance, all approved Study-Research Leave must be routed through the Benefits Administration Office.
2. Faculty members on Study-Research Leave are considered to be full-time permanent employees while on leave. They continue to be enrolled in the Virginia Retirement System or optional retirement program. Retirement contributions and group life insurance payments are based on regular full-time salary. Other deductions (social security, federal and state taxes) are based on the leave salary, including any private funds routed through University payroll.
3. Health care coverage will be continued while on leave in the same manner as prior to leave.

Approved by School Education Faculty on 9/23/94

Modified on 3/5/2001

Approved by School of Education Faculty on 3/6/2001

Modified on 10/7/15

Approved by SOE Faculty 10/13/15