



Policy Number: IV.15  
Policy Level: Operating Policy  
Originally Issued: January 13, 2016  
Reviewed: May 23, 2018  
Policy Owner: Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs  
Policy Implementation: Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs

## **SABBATICAL LEAVE**

### **I. Policy Statement and Purpose**

In accordance with Athens State University's mission, this policy establishes the standards for requesting Sabbatical Leave (with or without pay) and the requirements upon returning from an approved Sabbatical Leave.

The purpose of the sabbatical program is to enable faculty members to pursue their scholarly interests, free of their normal duties. It is awarded on the basis of merit.

### **II. Eligibility**

The ranks of Professor, Associate Professor, and Assistant Professor are eligible for sabbatical with or without pay.

Tenured full-time faculty members are eligible for sabbatical to apply for Sabbatical Leave with pay upon completion of six (6) years of continuous full-time service since their initial appointment or last Sabbatical.

Non-tenured faculty members are only eligible for professional improvement without pay.

Each sabbatical request requires a minimum of six years of continuous service.

### **III. Sabbatical Review Committee**

The Sabbatical Review Committee will be a sub-committee of the Faculty Affairs standing committee of the Faculty Senate, and the membership will be elected each year with the election facilitated by the Faculty Senate Elections Committee. The Committee will be comprised of six (6) full-time, tenured faculty members (two from each College). The Committee will elect its own chair from the membership and report its activities to the Faculty Senate.

### **IV. Application Process**

The faculty member must first submit a complete *Sabbatical Leave Application* to the appropriate College Dean no later than July 1 for either spring or fall of the next calendar year. This timeline gives the University adequate time to assess the impact of leave requests on finances, instruction and other University functions. Approval sequence of the *Sabbatical Leave Application* is as follows:

1. College Dean
2. Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs
3. Sabbatical Review Committee
4. University President



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The University President will transmit a letter to the applicant, with copies to the Dean, Provost, Sabbatical Committee and Human Resources, indicating if the sabbatical leave was approved or denied.

The *Sabbatical Leave Application* must include the following:

1. A full description of planned activities during the leave period including specific expected outcomes to be achieved.
2. An explanation of how these activities will benefit the University and the faculty member's professional and personal growth.
3. A description of arrangements to cover the faculty member's instructional responsibilities, supervision of advisees, and other duties for which the faculty member is responsible.
4. A plan for dissemination of results to the University community.

## **V. Pre and Post Requirements**

Sabbatical leave is not automatic. If a department has multiple requests for leave at any one time; maternity leave, family and medical leave (FMLA), and sabbatical leave have priority, in that order. College Deans may ask to postpone requests for sabbatical leave when such absences would make it difficult for the department or the college to meet its instructional obligations, although applications may still be forwarded through the entire process. Approved Sabbatical Leave may be postponed for the above reasons for no more than two years.

Faculty on sabbatical leave for **one semester** will be paid the full salary at the current rank at the time of the approved sabbatical.

Faculty on sabbatical leave for **one academic year** (Fall and Spring) will receive 50% of the salary at the current rank at the time of the approved sabbatical. No sabbatical leaves will include or be awarded for summer semester.

The faculty member must continue to make contributions to insurance and other benefit programs for them to remain in effect. Contributions normally made by the University to the faculty member's and other benefit programs shall be continued during the leave period. Faculty on sabbatical leave will receive credit for time in rank for promotion. Additionally, no faculty member on sabbatical leave may be employed elsewhere.

A faculty member granted sabbatical leave with or without pay must submit a written *Post-Sabbatical Leave Report*, within 90 calendar days, of all activities and accomplishments.



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Recipients of sabbatical leave are expected to return to the service of the University for a minimum of one (1) academic year after the completion of the leave. If a faculty member renders less than one (1) year of service to the University, the paid leave will be prorated and repaid to the University in one (1) payment or monthly payments until the balance of the paid leave is zero.

## **VI. Guidelines for the Post-Sabbatical Leave Report**

Within 90 calendar days after returning to the University, each sabbatical leave recipient shall forward the *Post-Sabbatical Leave Report* to include a description of activities and achievements, any variation from the original plan and recommendations to the appropriate College Dean.

Approval sequence of the *Post-Sabbatical Leave Report* is as follows:

1. College Dean
2. Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs
3. Sabbatical Review Committee
4. University President

The written sabbatical report shall be reviewed, by each of the aforementioned, as either meeting or not meeting the expected outcomes as listed in the *Sabbatical Leave Application*.

The Chair of the Sabbatical Committee may send the sabbatical report back to the faculty member for revisions with written feedback. The faculty member must revise this report within 30 calendar days and resubmit it to the Sabbatical Committee. Once any revisions are approved, the report must move forward in the approval process.

The consequences of not achieving the expected outcomes following a sabbatical leave shall be that the faculty member is ineligible to submit a future sabbatical leave proposal until the faculty member achieves or produces an outcome acceptable to the appropriate College Dean and the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs. The timeframe for eligibility of a future sabbatical will not begin until a satisfactory product has been completed from a previous sabbatical leave.

Additionally, within the fall or spring semester following the completion of an approved sabbatical leave, faculty may give or display a professional presentation to the University regarding the outcomes associated with the approved project.

## **VII. Responsibility for this Operating Policy**

### **Policy Owner**



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As part of the initial approval of this policy by the President and subsequent to the original dissemination of the policy, the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs is the policy owner for

the ongoing evaluation, review, and approval of this policy. Subsequent reviews and revisions to this policy must be in accordance with approved operating policy procedures and processes.

This policy will be reviewed every two years or more frequently as needed.

#### **Responsibility for Policy Implementation**

The President has assigned the responsibility of implementing this policy to the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs.