



UNIVERSITY
OF WYOMING

Office of
Academic Affairs

To: Academic Deans and Directors, Department Heads
From: Tami Benham-Deal, Senior Vice Provost
Date: April 16, 2024
Subject: Sabbatical and professional development leave requests for 2025-26 AY
Copies: Kevin Carman, Provost and Executive Vice President; Ed Seidel, President; Parag Chitnis, Vice President

This memorandum contains information and instructions for requesting sabbatical and professional development leaves for the 2025-26 academic year. Additional information, including a white paper on best practices for faculty leaves, instructions/application form, guidance on criteria for evaluating proposals, and a quick reference guide for online submissions, can be found on the Academic Affairs website (<http://www.uwyo.edu/acadaffairs/academic-personnel/leaves/index.html>). Please forward to individuals who are interested in sabbaticals, including committees that review sabbatical proposals.

The regulations governing these leaves include UW 2-3 and 2-16. These regulations can be found on the UW website at: <https://www.uwyo.edu/regs-policies/section-2-academic-affairs/academic-personnel.html>.

In accordance with the regulations, sabbaticals may be granted to tenured faculty members and professional development leave may be granted to academic personnel on extended-term or fixed-term appointments who have completed six (6) years of academic service at the University. However, the university does not recognize *de facto* leaves. The submission of an application does not automatically ensure that the leave will be granted.

Sabbatical and professional development proposals should reflect careful and thorough preparation that is appropriate for the benefit that this type of paid leave represents. In particular, it is important that each request carefully address the relationship between the proposed activities and the University's mission and strategic plan, provides a clear plan that identifies a focused purpose, intended scholarly and curricular outcomes, and a plan to achieve these outcomes.

Proposal requests will be submitted and reviewed through the WyoFolio system. Additional resources, including the proposal request form, instructions for submitting proposal documents, criteria for evaluating proposals, and a sample evaluation rating form are available on the AA website at: <https://www.uwyo.edu/acadaffairs/academic-personnel/leaves/index.html>.

Faculty members who will be submitting a proposal should contact their Dean's office and indicate an interest so that the college's WyoFolio system administrator can create the proper materials in the online system. For Directors in units reporting directly to the Provost – if someone in your unit plans to submit a proposal and you do not have a system administrator for the WyoFolio, contact facultyaffairs@uwyo.edu.

It is especially important that deans or other appropriate administrators only recommend those proposals judged to be of high value to the University and to have an important contribution to the applicant's professional growth and/or to the applicant's field of study. Deans or the appropriate administrator will provide a ranked list of proposals that he or she recommends from the college or unit to Academic Affairs by **Friday, September 28, 2024**. A justification for each proposal should be provided. The ranked list of proposals should be emailed directly to facultyaffairs@uwyo.edu. Deans can set their own internal deadlines for when Sabbatical Proposals will be due from your faculty. Sabbatical proposal cases should be forwarded to Academic Affairs within WyoFolio by the same deadline ranking and justifications from the Deans are to be sent to facultyaffairs@uwyo.edu.

During the review and recommendation process, Deans and Directors should take into account previously approved sabbatical or professional development leaves that have been delayed due to extenuating circumstances or if there are multiple proposals from the same department when determining the impact new leaves will have on a unit's capacity to meet instructional needs.

The college and department's plan for meeting instructional needs in the unit should be provided in the recommendation letter from both the Academic Unit Head and the Dean, including any needed adjustment of workload that may result from the sabbatical leave. Be specific about how the instructional needs will be met. For example, a temporary lecturer, graduate teaching assistant, or other faculty will teach major/required course(s), course(s) will be shifted to the next semester, and/or elective courses will be rescheduled. Please verify that any course changes will not impact student progress toward graduation. Please notify other units that might be affected by the sabbatical or professional development leave (e.g., when faculty have interdisciplinary or cross-disciplinary responsibilities and/or hold joint or SER appointments).

Upon receipt of all proposals, the Provost will ask the Faculty Senate Faculty Recognition Committee to provide him with additional feedback on proposals submitted to Academic Affairs.

Finally, I encourage faculty and administrators to review the sabbatical pay guidelines <https://www.uwyo.edu/acadaffairs/files/docs/sabbatical-pay-guidelines-updated-7-5-23.pdf>. Be advised that according to the UW regulation 2-16, a faculty member who does not return to the University for at least one academic year immediately following the leave shall be obligated to repay an amount equal to the net salary received during the leave. The repayment may not come from UW funds.