

**College of Liberal Arts
Marshall University
Sabbatical Leave Procedures and Guidelines**

The College of Liberal Arts fully endorses the concept of sabbatical leave. Marshall University policy states:

"Any person holding faculty rank is eligible for sabbatical leave after completion of at least six years of full-time employment in a faculty rank at Marshall University. After completing a sabbatical leave, a faculty member shall not be eligible for another sabbatical leave until the seventh subsequent year of full-time employment. Separate summer school employment shall not be counted toward eligibility for sabbatical leave." (2013 *Greenbook*)

This document is intended to comply with BOG AA-1, section 4.1, which reads:

“Each College will develop a *rigorous, multi-level, qualitative and quantitative process to evaluate the merits of each sabbatical proposal* as a substantive professional development project. Additionally, each college will *outline procedures for evaluating post-leave reports*. After reviewing each college’s evaluation procedures for sabbatical approval and post-leave reports, the faculty Senate Personnel Committee, in consultation with the Chief Academic Officer, will approve each college’s procedures, its sabbatical leave recommendations, and its post-leave reports.”

Prior to submitting an application for sabbatical, a faculty member in the College of Liberal Arts must meet with his or her department chair to discuss the proposed project, the benefits of the leave activity for the individual, the department and the university, and the impact of the leave on department scheduling and course rotations. While it is primarily the department chair’s responsibility to address teaching needs for a proposed sabbatical leave, the faculty member should be consulted about teaching load and appropriate coverage. If necessary, the director and the dean should then consult about teaching and other duties that will require attention during the proposed leave. Normally, the college does not receive any funding to compensate for a faculty member on leave, hence departmental adjustments are usually required to provide sufficient instructional coverage.

It is important to remember that **sabbatical leave is not an entitlement**. The institutional commitment to a sabbatical leave is significant, and an applicant is expected to present a well thought out, substantial, and compelling case for the privilege of having a sabbatical leave. Starting the process of preparing a request for leave well in advance of the published deadline is essential for a sound proposal. The faculty member should have a comprehensive plan that details why the project is important, how the proposed project will be accomplished, how the results of the leave will be disseminated, and how the work impacts the faculty member and the university.

The following points deserve careful consideration when formulating a proposal for sabbatical leave.

- You must propose a project that has meaning to what you do as a practitioner/scholar of your discipline and/or as a teacher, and you must explain the project in such a way that someone not intimately familiar with your discipline will understand the significance to you, your discipline, your students, and the institution.
- If conducting your project requires support from other institutions and/or professionals, access to special collections, or other resources that require the support of professionals or institutions, you must provide documentation that you have at least begun the inquiry process, if not have confirmation that you have secured appropriate permissions/support.
- If your proposed sabbatical leave requires special financial considerations for things like travel, acquisition of materials, etc., you must submit a budget. Approval of a sabbatical proposal does not necessarily indicate support for a budget request. Budget requests will be addressed through the faculty development process.
- You must articulate your methodology in terms the uninformed reader will understand. What are you planning to do and how are you going to accomplish your plans?
- You must list your goals and provide a reasonable timetable for accomplishing those goals.
- You must identify the anticipated outcomes of the sabbatical project. What are the results, what will you produce?
- If your outcomes differ significantly from your established record of professional accomplishment then you must provide supporting documentation that your outcomes are reasonable and attainable.

Sabbatical Leave Requests

Three forms must be completed by the faculty member and accompany the sabbatical proposal.

1. Available online at <https://www.marshall.edu/faculty-senate/sabbatical-leave/> , the *Sabbatical Leave Information and Routing* and *Sabbatical Leave Agreement* forms are self-explanatory.
2. *Note that the Sabbatical Leave Agreement form requires a Notary's signature.*
3. The *Sabbatical Leave Request* form asks for summary information and requires submission of a detailed plan as an attachment. The detailed plan and forms are submitted to the department chair for his/her review and signature, and that material then goes to the dean. The dean forwards all sabbatical leave requests to the College of Liberal Arts Research Committee. College policy charges that committee to “evaluate and consider” all sabbatical leave requests and then make recommendations on each proposal for support or not to the dean. The college has a **published protocol** for evaluating, rating, and ranking sabbatical requests. After receiving the Research Committee’s ratings, the dean makes his or her own recommendations to the provost, who recommends to the president. The president grants or does not grant sabbatical leave.

The *Sabbatical Leave Agreement* outlines a number of expectations of the faculty member who is granted a sabbatical. Among them is submitting a written report of his/her

activities while on sabbatical, due within 60 days of returning to faculty duties. In actuality, sabbatical leave reports are traditionally due to the dean's office, usually by mid September, in the year immediately following the year of the sabbatical leave. That precise due date is always listed in the Academic Affairs *Calendar of Due Dates* that is disseminated by the college in each fall. The sabbatical leave report should be submitted to the department chair, and when approved by the chair, the report is submitted to the dean.

Evaluation of COLA Sabbatical Leave Requests

The COLA Research Committee shall evaluate sabbatical requests using the following criteria. It is the responsibility of the applicant to clearly set forth and explain, where relevant, the significance and methodology of the proposed work within the context and standards of the applicable discipline.

1. The applicant has provided a clear explanation of the work that will be completed during sabbatical leave. 20 points
2. The proposed work will enhance the development of the applicant as a teacher and/or scholar. 30 points
3. The proposed work will advance the missions of the department, college, and the university. 30 points
4. The applicant has provided a clear statement as to how the work will be accomplished during sabbatical leave. 10 points
5. The applicant has explained how the work completed during sabbatical will be disseminated in a manner that will advance the purposes of sabbatical leave as set forth in the Marshall University Board of Governors Policy AA-1, Section 2.1. 10 points

Members of the COLA Research Committee shall evaluate each application on the above criteria using the assigned points. Members of the COLA Research Committee will provide the Committee Chair with the total points (0-100) they have awarded each applicant. The Committee Chair will then average for each applicant the points assigned by the Committee members and submit the results to the COLA Dean.

Sabbatical Leave Reports

There are no institutional guidelines for the sabbatical leave report. University policy establishes the goals of the sabbatical, defining it as: "a merit-based professional development activity that allows faculty to enhance their potential as teachers, artists, and scholars, and thereby make additional contributions to the missions of Marshall University." (BOG AA-1, 2.1)

Therefore, the college suggests the faculty member consider the following points.

1. Explain how your accomplishments during the sabbatical impact you as a teacher, scholar, artist, etc.
2. Explain how your accomplishments during the sabbatical will impact your interactions with current and future students, with your faculty colleagues, and your discipline.
3. What plans, if any, do you have for follow-up activities to the work and accomplishments of your sabbatical? If your stated outcomes include additional plans or anticipated accomplishments that build on work done during your sabbatical, address them.
4. How do you anticipate your sabbatical leave will make your department better?

5. Your sabbatical leave report should correlate to your proposal for the sabbatical. If your activities differ significantly from your proposal, you need to provide a clear explanation as to why. If the course of the sabbatical changed because the work you started out doing moved in a direction you did not anticipate, explain that and share what you learned as a result.
6. Remember that readers of the report will not have an intimate understanding of your discipline. Readers include the provost, president and possibly members of the governing board and even legislators. Take care to explain the significance of your activities and accomplishments in terms that a layperson can understand.
7. Your report should validate the concept of sabbatical leave. Write a report that would convince even a skeptical person that the concept of a sabbatical leave is healthy for higher education.

The department chair and dean will review the sabbatical report, alongside the original proposal. These reviewers will assess the report with particular attention to items 1-5 above. Where deficiencies are noted, the chair or dean will request additional information or revisions from the faculty member. The final report, approved by the chair and dean, will be submitted to Academic Affairs by the date published each year.

Do not hesitate to contact your department chair or the dean if you have any questions about the sabbatical process.