



## POLICIES AND PROCEDURES



## Policy

# Professional Leave Policy

**Category(ies)** *Faculty Handbook* Listed as 6.100 within Faculty Handbook

**Related Document (s)** *RCW 28B.10.650*  
Remunerated professional leaves for faculty members of institutions of higher education.

*Faculty Reappointment*  
Listed as "4.300: Faculty Reappointment" in *Faculty Handbook*

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## Introduction

The Evergreen State College has a strong commitment to teaching. This commitment includes the exploration of new and innovative ways to make each faculty member's teaching more effective and meaningful. Such a commitment, however, makes heavy demands on the faculty and staff of the institution. The Faculty Handbook lists the considerations involved in determining the suitability of faculty for continued service (section 4.300). These include the ability to teach effectively in a variety of modes to meet commitments such as rotation and team-teaching requirements, to plan curriculum, and to participate in college affairs. As a matter of college policy, faculty members typically devote at least one-third of their time to areas beyond their specialty. The creation of new academic programs and teaching teams each year makes further demands on both faculty and administrators.

All of the foregoing make it obvious that strengthening each faculty member's teaching within the normal day-to-day pressure of work at the college is difficult. The professional leaves policy allows faculty to take time off from their normal duties to pursue development and improvement in the many ways expected of them. This policy thus has significant benefits, both to the institution and its students, and to the individual. Specific objectives of the college's professional leaves policy include:

1. allowing faculty to update knowledge of their professional fields and to advance knowledge through research and study;
2. allowing faculty to develop skills and knowledge outside their "own" professional fields;
3. allowing faculty to increase competence in research, teaching and creative skills; and

4. allowing faculty to acquire background, information and materials for new teaching programs.

## Eligibility and Conditions

1. All personnel designated regular members of the faculty or library faculty will be eligible for paid professional leave as described in this policy provided that both at the time of application and during the leave the faculty member is in good standing as defined by the Faculty Handbook as currently in existence and hereinafter amended.

2. (a) For half-time regular faculty teaching in Part-time Studies, eligibility for paid professional leave at half salary will accrue at the rate of one quarter per 16 quarters of half-time service to the institution (excluding summer school).

(b) For all other regular faculty, eligibility for paid professional leave will accrue at the rate of one quarter per 16 quarters (5.33 years) of full-time equivalent service to the institution (excluding summer school).

3. An individual entitled to leave may apply for one, two or three quarters of paid leave in any one academic year and up to a maximum of four quarters of paid leave in any six-year period. Persons taking less leave than accrued shall retain eligibility for the remaining accrued leave.

4. In computing service periods, eligibility for leave is accrued whenever the faculty member is being paid from the faculty salary allocation of the academic budget. In addition to regular teaching assignments, faculty are paid from the faculty salary allocation of the academic budget when they are on periods of academic exchange at The Evergreen State College (e.g., library exchange); on teaching exchanges with other institutions (except when they take unpaid leave and are then hired by another institution to teach); or serve as an off-campus director, teacher education director, graduate program director, or academic dean. Depending on the conditions of their contracts, the president, provost, and dean of the library may also accrue eligibility for professional leave. Periods of sick leave or maternity leave are not disqualifying. Periods of unpaid leave do not accrue eligibility for paid professional leave. Periods of paid leave (e.g., to do sponsored research) do not accrue leave eligibility. Periods of paid professional leave under this policy likewise do not accrue leave eligibility. Periods of paid leave from sources other than that used to fund paid professional leaves do not accrue eligibility, but also do not count as accrued leave taken when computing leave eligibility.

5. Professional leave cannot be used for the sole purpose of completing advanced degree requirements.

6. The number of persons on paid professional leave during any one academic year shall not exceed the limitations in Substitute House Bill 662, 1977, Section 1(5), which specified by state law (RCW 28B.10.650) as currently exists and hereinafter amended) now amounts to 4.0%.

7. A period of service following a paid professional leave will be required upon return from leave, the period of service being equal to the duration of the leave. Upon accepting a professional leave, the faculty member agrees to such service. Any failure to serve shall require prorata repayment of the monetary value of the professional leave benefit (salary + benefits).

8. Professional leaves must be taken within the time period for which they are granted, unless postponed at the college's request. If a faculty member chooses not to take a leave which has been approved, s/he must notify the provost (normally at least one year prior to the scheduled leave), and reapply. S/he will retain eligibility just as if the leave had never been awarded.

9. Upon completion of a leave, the recipient is expected to share findings and/or accomplishments of the leave with the campus community so that all interested persons can benefit. A written report shall be filed

with the provost.

## Application Procedure

1. At the beginning of each academic year, the provost or the dean whose desk assignments include professional leaves will notify all faculty of their eligibilities and encourage them to apply for professional leave. Applications from members of the faculty for paid professional leave in response to this notification must be submitted by December 15, two academic years preceding the academic year in which the leave is to be taken.
2. Applications will be submitted to the dean responsible for professional leaves. After reading each proposal, the dean may make comments for the benefit of the author. In cases where the dean feels the proposal would benefit from a wider collegial review, s/he may encourage the applicant to share the proposal in a presentation to her/his planning unit or other appropriate audience(s) in order to foster academic discussion and solicit feedback regarding ideas, if any, for improving the professional leave proposal.
3. Applications should be submitted in the form of a two-to-three page letter and must include at least the following information:
  - a. statement of proposed activity;
  - b. purpose and scope of the activity;
  - c. a broad statement of the author's professional agenda showing how the proposed leave fits into that agenda;
  - d. benefits expected from the activity in light of the faculty member's strengths and weaknesses;
  - e. detailed plans for carrying out the activity;
  - f. dates and length of leave requested;
  - g. a statement of how the proposed absence might affect the curriculum; and
  - h. expected remuneration, if any, from another source.
4. Provost and deans.
  - a. The provost and deans shall make application and be considered for paid professional leave through the same process as other faculty members. Eligibility, application requirements, time of submission, and the criteria used for evaluating applications for professional leave shall be on the same basis as for other faculty, *except* that eligibility for leave for the provost and deans shall accrue at the rate of one quarter per every two years of service in these positions.
  - b. Quarters of paid professional leave granted to the provost and the deans shall be taken from the exempt administrator professional leave allocation and shall not decrease the number of quarters of leave available to other faculty members.

## Basis of selection

1. All eligible faculty with an equal amount of service have an equal right to professional leave. Therefore, all proposals shall be reviewed only to determine:
  - a. the eligibility of the faculty member based on duration of service to the institution and whether or not the faculty member is in good standing; and
  - b. that the leave is for work in the faculty member's field of expertise or in a field that the faculty member is developing as a part of current or proposed teaching at TESC. Leaves cannot be made for the pursuit of an

advanced degree.

2. Acceptable applications as determined in (1) above shall be ranked by the provost or dean responsible for professional leaves in terms of accrued leave eligibility, subtracting 16 quarters (or 5.3 years full-time equivalent) of eligibility for each quarter of paid professional leave previously taken by the faculty member while at TESC.

3. Requests for leaves of two quarters duration from those faculty members having 10.67 or more years of service shall first be granted based on the ranking in (2) above. If additional quarters of leave are available after all such leaves have been awarded, additional leaves may be granted either as one-quarter leaves or as year-long leaves. Individuals applying for one quarter of leave and having 5.3 years or more of eligibility shall have preference (in order of eligibility), followed by individuals applying for one full year of leave and having 16 years or more of service (in order of eligibility). If additional quarters of leave are still available, faculty with less than the normally expected eligibility may be awarded leaves following the same process in order of eligibility. In the event that a decision has to be made between two or more persons having the same eligibility, it shall be made based on consultation with the parties involved. Consideration shall be given to cases where proposed research cannot be delayed due to external constraints and special attention shall be accorded to those individuals wishing to utilize accrued leave prior to retirement. In addition, in the event that a decision has to be made between two or more persons having the same eligibility, any individual(s) who can delay his or her proposed leave for up to two years will be allowed to do so without needing to reapply. In the case where a decision still must be made between two or more persons having the same eligibility, neither of whom can defer his or her leave, the decision shall be made by the flip of a coin.

4. In the event that there is a pressing need for a faculty member to go on leave because a unique opportunity has arisen and the faculty member does not qualify for a paid professional leave or qualifies for a leave of insufficient duration, the dean whose desk assignments include professional leave shall make every effort to assist in locating outside funding in order to permit or extend the leave. Proposals requiring additional college funding to make the leave possible or to extend it will be competitive and will be reviewed by the sponsored research committee.

## **Compensation and Status**

1. The remuneration from state general funds and general local funds for any professional leave granted for any academic year shall not exceed the average of the highest quartile of the rank order of salaries of all full-time teaching faculty holding academic year contracts or appointments at the institution. Compensation will include college contributions to medical insurance and retirement programs.

2. In the case of an individual receiving additional compensation for any part of a paid professional leave (foundation or fellowship grants, salary, etc.), compensation from the college will normally be reduced so that the total compensation for the leave period will not exceed the individual's current salary. Funds received specifically for travel, equipment, secretarial services or supplies will not be included in the category of "extra compensation."

3. Individuals on professional leave shall be entitled to the same benefits as other personnel in the same category. This applies to salary raises, insurance coverage, liability coverage, medical benefits and retirement.

4. For purposes of advancement on the faculty salary scale, periods of paid professional leave shall be counted as part of the faculty's experience years.

## Portfolio while on leave

All personnel on paid professional leave will be expected to document their activities by maintaining their portfolios in the same manner as while on regular employment with the college.

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