

MEMORANDUM OF RESOLUTION

TO: Fort Wayne Senate

FROM: A. Marshall  
Executive Committee

DATE: December 6, 2021

SUBJ: Review of Sabbatical Application Process

Whereas, PFW faculty have been working in a climate of ever-increasing work responsibilities, which for many faculty have limited their ability to devote appropriate time to research;

Whereas, PFW faculty have been working under significant budget constraints, which reduced their ability to attend conferences and short research trips; and

Whereas, the sabbatical time has been up till now the main option for many faculty to set aside time for their research; and

Whereas, during the review process of sabbatical applications by Professional Development Subcommittee (PDS) in Fall 2021, an unprecedented number of applications (6) were not recommended for a sabbatical, with the VCAA choosing this opportunity to follow the recommendations of PDS, despite overturning their recommendations in the past; and

Whereas, after all the sabbatical applications were submitted, the VCAA met with PDS to offer them suggestions for how they should review the applications; and

Whereas, PDS developed a set of criteria to evaluate sabbatical applications after sabbatical applications were already submitted based on “instructions from the VCAA,” and selectively using wording from SD 06-14, in some cases taking words out of context; and

Whereas, there appears to be an inconsistency in how many years of past productivity PDS considered; and

Whereas, faculty who submitted their sabbatical applications had no idea that PDS would be creating its own criteria after the applications were already turned in; and

Whereas, this process violates established practices of PDS where applications and evaluation rubrics are closely aligned and made available to applicants ahead of time, as is the case with Summer Research Grant Applications; and

Whereas, SD 06-14 states that “each department or division should establish specific criteria for the granting of sabbatical leaves that will serve as the basis of evaluation for applications coming from that department or division, and that are consistent with the above guidelines”; and

Whereas, the actions of PDS and the VCAA appear to be in violation of SD 06-14 as well as past practices of PDS; and

Whereas, these actions have caused tremendous stress for affected faculty, and a great deal of work for many members of the campus community; and

Whereas, the Faculty Affairs Committee (FAC) is the parent Committee of PDS and FAC is responsible for being “concerned with the responsibilities, rights, privileges, opportunities, and welfare of the Faculty, ...” (Bylaws 5.3.2.2.); and

Whereas, the Executive Committee considers this charge to FAC to warrant Faculty Senate deliberation at a Senate meeting;

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Faculty Affairs Committee undertake a review of the role that Office of Academic Affairs procedures or lack of procedures played in the way PDS carried out its review of sabbatical applications in Fall 2021; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Faculty Affairs Committee undertake a review of the way PDS carried out its review of sabbatical applications in Fall 2021; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Faculty Affairs Committee make appropriate revisions to SD 06-14, such as clarifying the role of the VCAA, clarifying the role of PDS, clarifying the process for determining criteria for evaluation, determining whether department criteria still have primacy, and any other matters that will prevent any confusion and therefore unnecessary stress for faculty in the future; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that FAC submit its recommendations and/or policy revisions to the Executive Committee by the March 25, 2022 document deadline so that any updated policies can be implemented in fall of 2022.