

MEMORANDUM

TO: Fort Wayne Senate

FROM: Deborah Bauer, Wylie Sirk, Co-Chairs  
Faculty Affairs Committee

DATE: 10/27/2023

SUBJ: Approval of Rubric for Sabbatical Applications

WHEREAS, In February 2022 the Fort Wayne Senate charged the Faculty Affairs Committee (FAC) with reviewing procedures used by the Professional Development Subcommittee (PDS) and the Office of Academic Affairs (OAA) for reviewing and granting faculty sabbaticals.

WHEREAS, On April 11, 2022, the Faculty Senate approved a document containing changes and updates to SD 06-14 Sabbatical leaves (attached SD 21-39).

WHEREAS, Discussion in Faculty Senate on Oct. 10, 2022 of Senate Doc 22-5 (attached) revealed that certain elements of the recommended document had not be incorporated into the PDS rubric.

WHEREAS, Faculty Affairs Committee requested to PDS that the changes be incorporated and updated by March 3, 2023.

WHEREAS, PDS sent FAC two documents, a revised Sabbatical Application Review Procedures and PDS Sabbatical Evaluation Form Rubric on February 28, 2023 (attached).

WHEREAS, FAC approved the revised PDS Sabbatical Evaluation Form Rubric in a meeting on March 13, 2023.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Fort Wayne Senate approve the changes to the PDS Sabbatical Evaluation Form Rubric for evaluating sabbatical applications.

# MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Senate Faculty Affairs Committee  
**FROM:** Professional Development Subcommittee  
S. Ding; R. Cousik; S. Johnson; A. Khalifa; S. LeBlanc; J. Li; S. Rumsey (chair)  
**CC:** C. Drummond; J. Meyers (OAA)  
**DATE:** February 28, 2023  
**RE:** Revised Sabbatical Application Review Procedures

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As requested, the PDS has updated its sabbatical application review procedures in the following ways:

1. Revised language of scoring rubric to more carefully explain components of the 5-page narrative, including:
  - a. Goals and significance of the project, which must include scholarly references
  - b. Methods, procedures, or creative approach to be applied
  - c. A plan of work for how applicant will use their sabbatical leave
  - d. Expected outcomes that will measure success
  - e. A description of how the project will enhance applicant's professional development.
2. Revised language of scoring rubric to more carefully explain how applicants must demonstrate scholarly productivity since the time of hire for first sabbaticals or since the last sabbatical for second and subsequent sabbaticals, with emphasis placed on accomplishments during the immediately preceding past 5 years. If the applicant deems significant service, administration, or teaching overload have impacted their productivity it is their responsibility to fully describe those activities and their impact.
3. Revised language of scoring rubric to require letters of support from department/unit committee, chair/dean, and any outside collaborators.
4. Revised rubric scoring methods.

In addition, the PDS has made recommendations to the Office of Academic Affairs to update their PFW Sabbatical Procedures document in the following ways:

1. Change required narrative components to mirror those listed in 1a. to 1e. above.
2. Remove the length limit to CVs so that faculty are more easily able to demonstrate scholarly productivity.
3. Require a letter of support from the chair/director that demonstrates support for the significance of the applicant's proposed sabbatical project, evidence of ongoing scholarly work, and how this project differs or builds upon past sabbaticals. Absence of such a letter will result in a denial of the application.
4. Require a letter of support from the relevant departmental or division faculty committee that has reviewed the application. This letter should address the significance of the applicant's proposed sabbatical project, evidence of ongoing scholarly work, and how this project differs or builds upon past sabbaticals. Absence of such a letter will potentially negatively impact the success of the application.
5. Include language that indicates that the final decision for awarding sabbaticals is that of the Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs. Further, denied applications will be given clear and

individualized explanations for the rejection of their applications. The decision process is strictly the responsibility of the Vice Chancellor and the Office of Academic Affairs, not the Professional Development Subcommittee.

**PDS Sabbatical Leave Application Evaluation Form**

Faculty name: \_\_\_\_\_ Proposal title: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Department: \_\_\_\_\_ Previous sabbatical leave (report provided): \_\_\_\_\_  
 Rank: \_\_\_\_\_

As stated in Senate Document SD 06-14 (amended in SD 21-39) the criteria below are required as part of the sabbatical application. All scores are on a 0 – 5 point scale with 0 being unsatisfactory and 5 being excellent.

<p>1. <u>A statement of goals for the sabbatical project that demonstrate its significance.</u>                  The applicant must clearly document their research goals and the significance of the project for their proposed sabbatical leave. Position the project in relation to relevant scholarly literature. Members of the PDS are scholars from many fields, but not necessarily well versed in the applicant’s discipline. The applicant should use language that is easily understandable by readers who are not experts in the applicant’s discipline and define discipline-specific terminology when necessary. Letters of support from chair/dean and unit committee endorsing the project will also factor into this portion of the evaluation.</p>	<p>Score:</p>
<p>2. <u>A statement of the methods, procedures, and/or creative approach that will be employed for the sabbatical project.</u>                  The applicant must provide a clear description of methods, procedures, and/or creative approach they will use in their research project during their proposed sabbatical leave. Again, the applicant should use language that is easily understandable by readers who are not experts in the applicant’s discipline. If applicable, letters from IRB, collaborators, or funding sources will also factor into this portion of the evaluation.</p>	<p>Score:</p>
<p>3. <u>A plan of work that accounts for how the applicant will use their time during the sabbatical period.</u>                  The applicant must clearly state how they will use their time during the sabbatical leave. This can be a timeline or plan of action.</p>	<p>Score:</p>
<p>4. <u>A statement of expected outcomes from the sabbatical project or how you will measure the success of your sabbatical leave.</u>                  The applicant must provide a clear rationale for the project’s success. Examples include expected publications, grants, applications in the classroom, exhibits or performances, or community engagement activities.</p>	<p>Score:</p>
<p>5. <u>A statement describing the impact of the sabbatical on reinvigorating or advancing the applicant’s professional development and the university’s goals.</u>                  The applicant must clearly explain how the proposed project fits in their overall program of scholarship and supports their professional growth and university/department/program goals.</p>	<p>Score:</p>
<p>6. <u>A statement that discusses the applicant’s scholarly productivity in recent years</u>                  The applicant must clearly explain their ongoing scholarly work (publications, conference presentations, creative endeavor production, grants etc.) since the time of hire for first sabbaticals or since the last sabbatical for second and subsequent sabbaticals, with emphasis placed on accomplishments during the immediately preceding past 5 years. In cases where significant service, administrative, and/or teaching overload has markedly affected research output within the five years, faculty should provide a statement explaining the specific impact of these activities and their outcomes. The evidence of productivity should be reflected in the CV and in letters of support from chair/dean and unit committee. Report(s) from previous sabbatical(s) also factor into this portion of the evaluation.</p>	<p>Score:</p>
<p>ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:</p>	<p>Total:                  ___/30</p>

MEMORANDUM

TO: Fort Wayne Senate

FROM: Faculty Affairs Committee

DATE: March 28, 2022

SUBJECT: Approval of Changes/Updates to SD 06-14: Sabbatical Leaves

WHEREAS, there has been confusion regarding procedures in evaluating applications for sabbatical leaves,

WHEREAS, a number of faculty applications for sabbatical leaves in the Fall 2021 semester have been denied despite providing necessary documentation as evidence warranting for granting of leaves,

WHEREAS, decisions to decline sabbatical leaves were issued regardless of the denied faculty applications having demonstrably met the requirements and protocols established by their respective departments and SD 06-14: Sabbatical Leaves,

WHEREAS, the Faculty Affairs Committee (FAC) was charged with submitting a report (included below) on sabbatical review procedures by Office of Academic Affairs and the Professional Development Committee,

WHEREAS, FAC had included 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.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Senate approve the updated SD 06-14 that further clarifies and establishes the appropriate process of evaluating cases submitted for sabbatical leave as follows:

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## SABBATICAL LEAVES

PFW's mission includes the search for new knowledge, excellent teaching, and service to the university, profession, and community. In order to maintain and continue the high level of academic excellence necessary to support this mission, it is important for the faculty to periodically update and strengthen their professional skills. A sound program of sabbatical leaves is thus of vital importance to the University in that it provides for this continued professional growth and new or renewed intellectual achievement through significant study, research, and writing that cannot easily be done while engaged in the ongoing duties of a faculty member.

A sabbatical leave is not a leave which a faculty member automatically "earns" by having been employed for a given period of time. Rather, it is an investment by the University in the expectation that the sabbatical leave will significantly enhance the faculty member's capacity to contribute to the objectives of the University. For this reason, all periods of sabbatical leave count as full-time service to the University and will be approved only if there is adequate reason to believe that they will achieve this purpose. *Candidates should know that the way this belief is evaluated will be based on the presentation (via narrative, CV, and/or department support letters) of a candidate's scholarly productivity in recent years. If a candidate has devoted considerable time to service, teaching-related work, or other activity at the expense of research productivity, they should plan to explain this.*

A statement of goals for the sabbatical, an outline of the type of evidence that will be used to demonstrate how those goals will be achieved, and a statement of the proposed use of the applicant's time during the sabbatical period are required as part of the sabbatical application. Acceptable programs for the use of time may include:

1. Research on significant issues and problems, including pedagogical issues.
2. Important creative or descriptive work in any means of expression, for example, writing, painting, and so forth.
3. Retraining in new domains of scholarship or creative endeavor in one's discipline. Such retraining may be used to enhance one's scholarship and/or one's teaching capabilities.

Before being evaluated by the Professional Development Subcommittee, applications for sabbatical leave must have been reviewed to ensure that the applications meet the guidelines specified in this document by appropriate administrators (chair/dean or director). *A departmental or division faculty committee (e.g., the Promotion and Tenure or Personnel*

Committee) must make a written recommendation about sabbatical applications to the appropriate administrator at that level, which must factor into PDS' evaluation process. The administrator will forward this recommendation along with his or her own recommendation to the next level.

The Professional Development Subcommittee is responsible for recommendations to the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs regarding sabbatical leave applications. Professional Development Subcommittee should follow only this document and department criteria in evaluating sabbatical applications. PDS operates as an independent faculty committee. The Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs makes final decisions regarding sabbatical leave applications. Process questions should be brought to Faculty Affairs Committee for guidance. Denied applications should be given clear and individualized explanations for the rejection of their applications with an opportunity to respond.

At the termination of the leave, and not later than three months after returning to campus, the faculty member must submit a report about the sabbatical leave to the department chair or program director to whom they report. The Chair forwards the report to the next level, usually the Dean or Director, who forwards the report to the Office of Academic Affairs. This report must outline how the sabbatical period was used, what outcomes were achieved, and indicate further outcomes that are expected as a result of the sabbatical project. All such reports must be included with subsequent sabbatical applications. Information about the outcome of previous sabbaticals will be used to evaluate subsequent sabbatical applications.

(Note: Per Senate Document [SD 06-19](#), 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.)

## Faculty Affairs Committee Report on Sabbatical Review Procedures

In February 2022, Senate charged the Faculty Affairs Committee to 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;
- a review of the way PDS carried out its review of sabbatical applications in Fall 2021;

Senate charged the Faculty Affairs Committee to

- 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;

Senate charged FAC to

- 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.

In view of the charge, Senate FAC conducted interviews (VCAA, PDS Chair, others) and found the following for which we make recommendations.

**Finding 1:** PDS Chair mentioned that in the past, the Subcommittee did not use rubrics. In 2021, PDS developed and adopted rubrics for evaluating sabbatical applications. The rubrics apply varying weights to different evaluation items with the heaviest weight on recent publications.

**Recommendations:** As PDS starts adopting specific rubrics for evaluating sabbatical applications, it will be beneficial to make the rubrics, specifically the evaluation items, available to faculty members prior to the call for applications for sabbatical leave.

Given decisions on sabbatical applications based on the currently adopted rubrics are different than previous decisions, if rubrics will be used to take future decisions, such rubrics need to be approved by Faculty Affairs Committee and made public before applications are due.

The Senate Document and/or OAA guidelines need to inform candidates that productivity for the last 5 (or possibly fewer) years is a major consideration for those reviewing sabbatical applications, and as such, they should be clear that this information is included in CVs and/or candidate narratives.

**Finding 2:** While the pre-existing processes for evaluating sabbatical application proposals did not include rubrics, in Fall 2021 PDS decided to adopt a similar process to that used for evaluating Summer Faculty Grant proposals. One of the points the PDS Chair mentioned was that, in light of the rubric used to evaluate sabbatical application proposals in Fall 2021, there were unsatisfactory proposals due to lack of or inadequate literature review.

**Recommendations:** For Summer Faculty Grants, applicants are allowed to request one or two previous successful proposals for review. As PDS uses the same process for evaluating both types



of proposals, we recommend that approved sabbatical proposals be made available for review by candidates. This will be consistent with the process of Summer Faculty Grants. In addition, it will help faculty members construct their sabbatical proposals of better quality and have a better success with their applications.

**Finding 3:** Senate FAC found that PDS considered themselves to have been put in a position of pressure from upper administration to limit the number of applications approved. The VCAA noted in an interview that staffing and cost of staffing at the university are a prime concern for his office and therefore sought to be extra diligent in decisions regarding how university money is spent. This diligence, it seems, may have resulted in the pressure felt by the members of the PD subcommittee.

**Recommendations:** PFW documents should reflect what faculty believe to be a proper relationship of communication between VCAA and PDS for sabbatical applications. VCAA's office should not do anything that gives members of PDS the impression that certain findings are expected from them. Anything otherwise dilutes the important role of shared faculty governance and decision-making on the campus.

**Finding 4:** Candidates denied sabbatical for the 2021 application cycle were not offered a clear and personalized explanation for the rejection of their applications. This has the potential to inflict stress, anxiety, and breed self-doubt in our own colleagues. Especially given our findings of the changed process for evaluating sabbaticals this year, this discovery is particularly concerning for the strain likely put on faculty whose applications were rejected.

**Recommendations:** The Senate or OAA documents need to include some language that requires either PDS or VCAA or both to offer faculty whose applications were not approved a clear and fair explanation for this decision.

**Finding 5:** Expectations for what belonged in the candidate's proposal were not clearly indicated in the relevant Senate and OAA documents. Examples of discrepancies include: no specific request for literature review in application, yet some PDS members were looking for it; emphasis on CV should show productivity in last five years; requests for specificity in what and where faculty aimed to publish after the fact.

**Recommendations:** Expand language in Senate or OAA documents to reflect these requests. Moreover, the language should include a grandfather clause to allow time for faculty to accommodate the new criteria on publications.

**Finding 6:** The Committee found an almost total neglect of Department or College criteria and recommendations in the decision-making process when it came to evaluating applications. Whereas candidates are asked to make sure their application adheres to department criteria, these criteria are no longer relevant once the dossier reaches PDS. Similarly, department members give time and energy to sitting on review committees and reviewing the sabbatical proposals, while recommendations of committees, chairs, and deans, seem not to factor into the rubric for evaluating faculty applications at all.

**Recommendations:** Senate document should be revised to require that PDS and/or VCAA take into consideration the recommendations and opinions of department and college faculty when evaluating the potential sabbatical.

**Finding 7:** Senate committees are sometimes not aware of the relevant Senate Documents that should be used to guide their work.

**Recommendation:** All Senate committees should be given information regarding their role, responsibilities, and relevant Senate documents to fulfill their charge.

MEMORANDUM OF RESOLUTION

TO: Fort Wayne Senate

FROM: A. Nasr, Chair  
Executive Committee

DATE: October 3, 2022

SUBJ: Review of Sabbatical Application Rubric Developed by PDS for 2022-2023

Whereas, due to irregularities with the way that sabbatical applications were reviewed during the 2021-2022 academic year, Senate EC asked Senate FAC to review the process and make recommendations for improvement (SD 21-15);

Whereas, Senate FAC made recommendations to improve the process (SD 21-39) and that document was unanimously approved by Senate at the April 2022 meeting;

Whereas, it was the hope of the Senate EC that the review process itself and the guidance from FAC would help PDS develop a fair rubric to evaluate sabbatical applications, given the important role that sabbaticals play in the professional life of faculty, especially faculty with additional responsibilities that make it difficult for them to consistently dedicate time for research;

Whereas, PDS came up with a rubric and announced it on September 20<sup>th</sup>, while deadline for sabbatical applications to PDS was set for October 7, with earlier deadlines set by departments to ensure that the applications were able to be reviewed by department committees, chairs, and deans;

Whereas, the rubric PDS developed does not align with SD 21-39;

Whereas, for example, the rubric includes the following section:

*Evidence of “Scholarly Productivity in Recent Years”*

*Senate Document SD 06-14 states: “A sabbatical leave is not a leave which a faculty member automatically earns by having been employed for a given period of time. Rather, it is an investment by the University in the expectation that the sabbatical leave will significantly enhance the faculty member’s capacity to contribute to the objectives of the University. For this reason, all periods of sabbatical leave count as full-time service to the University and will be approved only if there is adequate reason to believe that they will achieve this purpose. Candidates should know that the way this belief is evaluated will be based on the presentation (via narrative, CV, and/or department support letters) of a candidate’s scholarly productivity in recent years.”*

Whereas, the rubric ends its long quotation before the sentence in 21-39 that quite significantly alters the meaning and emphasis of this paragraph, namely “If a candidate has devoted considerable time to service, teaching-related work, or other activity at the expense of research productivity, they should plan to explain this.”

BE IT RESOLVED, that PDS goes back and reviews its rubric, revising it again to align with both the letter and spirit of SD 21-39;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that PDS takes particular care in making sure they properly quote and cite sentences and paragraphs from relevant Senate documents, governing the sabbatical review process;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that PDS reports the results of its recommendations to Senate EC (including information on total number of applications, total number of positive and negative recommendations; and confirmation that anyone who may receive a negative recommendation from PDS received detailed and timely feedback on their application by January 2023.