

Memo To: All UH-Downtown/PS Holders UH-Downtown/PS 10.A.08
Issue No. 5
From: Dr. Antonio Tillis, Interim President Effective Date: 07/20/2020
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Subject: University Funded Faculty Leave Program

1. PURPOSE

The University of Houston-Downtown's funded faculty leave (FFL) program is intended to enable faculty members to engage in research, writing, field observation, internships, and other suitable professional or academic activities to improve their professional effectiveness. The leave grants are awarded on a competitive basis.

Faculty on FFL are under no obligation to engage in any work beyond the scope of the approved funded leave. However, faculty on FFL may choose to engage in limited teaching and/or service during the funded leave period, based on their sole discretion. Faculty members who are granted FFL cannot be adversely affected as a result of taking a leave (e.g. service opportunities, evaluations, salary adjustments, etc.).

The basic criteria for awarding a funded faculty leave grant are (1) the benefits of the proposed activity to the academic discipline and/or the UHD community, (2) the quality and feasibility of the proposal, and (3) the qualifications and accomplishments of the applicant.

2. DEFINITIONS

Funded faculty leave (FFL): refers only to leaves funded by UHD.

3. POLICY

- 3.1 In accordance with System policy, [SAM 02.D.04](#), which states, "Information on faculty development leaves is available through each designated university Office of the Provost," policy and procedure not specifically enumerated here (PS 10.A.08) is available from the Office of the Provost.
- 3.2 Applicant Eligibility
 - 3.2.1 The applicant must hold a full-time, tenured/tenure-track faculty appointment at UHD at the time of application.
 - 3.2.2 The applicant also must have held a full-time, tenured/tenure-track faculty appointment at UHD for at least two years immediately preceding the beginning of a faculty development leave.
 - 3.2.3 Funded Faculty Leave awards can be used only while the faculty member serves on a tenured or tenure-track appointment to the University.

- 3.2.4 The applicant must be in good standing with the university at the time of funding.
- 3.2.5 Members of the university FFL committee and a department FFL committee are ineligible for funding through the FFL program.
- 3.2.6 Faculty on funded leave cannot earn additional compensation for service or teaching carried out for UHD during the funded leave period.
- 3.2.7 Faculty members on FFL may participate in teaching activities that were approved as part of the funded leave application (for example, thesis supervision, supervising student research).
- 3.2.8 Faculty members on Funded Leave may engage in service to the department, college, or university when such service is associated with privileges associated with holding faculty rank in good standing, such as engaging in shared governance activities, Promotion & Tenure activities, etc. In order to ensure adequate representation and full committee functionality, faculty on funded leave must articulate their planned service activities to the department chair at least one month before the leave period begins and commit to full participation in any committee-related service during the period of leave.
- 3.2.9 Awardees of the Core Fulbright U.S. Scholar Program, or other nationally competitive programs may be eligible for the terms and support equivalent to a funded leave during their participation in such programs. Such eligibility will be determined in consultation with the Provost and outside of the purview of the FFL process. Award amounts available under this policy will not be reduced to support such cases.

3.3 Length of Leave

- 3.3.1 FFLs are funded for one long semester.
- 3.3.2 Faculty may choose to distribute their leave across two long semesters (with each semester at half of the funded leave award amount). Applicants should include a request for a two-semester leave structure in their application for the leave.

3.4 Amount of Compensation

- 3.4.1 The compensation for the FFL will be the applicant's salary for the leave period.
- 3.4.2 Any additional compensation earned from non-UHD entities during the period of leave is subject to [PS 02.A.05 - Additional Compensation for](#)

3.5 Outside Employment / Outside Grants

3.5.1 Faculty members on leave may accept grants for study, research, or travel from any institution of higher education; from a charitable, religious, or educational corporation or foundation; or from any federal, state, or local government, in compliance with the UH System as well as state policies and regulations.

3.5.2 Faculty members who wish to accept outside employment while on FFL must comply with the provisions of PS 02.A.04.

3.6 Benefits Eligibility

3.6.1 Any faculty member on a FFL is eligible to receive the benefits made available by UHD to faculty members.

3.7 Percentage Limitations

3.7.1 The percentage of University of Houston-Downtown faculty on funded leave at any one time will not exceed the percentage allowed by state law.

3.8 Obligation

3.8.1 A faculty member receiving FFL must agree to continue employment at UHD for two long semesters for each long semester of leave at full pay or the equivalent. Faculty members who do not fulfill this obligation must reimburse the university for the amount of their stipend and corresponding benefits. Should the university terminate the employment of the faculty member prior to completion of this mandatory service time, the faculty member has no obligation to reimburse the university for the amount of the funded salary or the corresponding benefits.

3.8.2 Faculty members must submit a written report of activities undertaken while on leave to the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost, the candidate's College Dean, and Department Chair, within one long semester after their return. This report must be made available to the University community via the University/College website.

3.9 Subsequent Funded Faculty Leaves

3.9.1 Those faculty members granted a funded faculty leave ordinarily are not eligible to receive another such leave until the seventh year after the academic

year for which they were last granted a funded faculty leave.

3.10 Time toward Tenure

3.10.1 Untenured faculty members granted a FFL will have their leave time counted toward the tenure probationary period.

3.10.1.1 Untenured faculty on an FFL are responsible for submitting any material required by the tenure process (4th year review, notice of application for tenure, etc.) at the times required by [PS 10.A.01 Rank and Tenure System](#)

3.11 Returning Salary

3.11.1 Faculty members awarded a FFL are guaranteed to have their returning salary at least match their salary prior to taking the leave. FFL faculty are eligible for merit raises. Any increase in the faculty member's returning salary will be given in accord with the University's procedures for that year.

3.12 Additional Restrictions

3.12.1 Funded Faculty Leaves will not be granted for any summer session.

3.13 Unfunded Leave

3.13.1 A faculty member whose request for a funded faculty leave is denied has the right to request consideration for an unfunded leave without reference to the timetable stated in [PS 10.A.14 Faculty Leaves Not Funded by the University](#).

3.14 Unused Leaves

3.14.1 Any unused leave funds will be added to the next year's pool of leaves.

3.14.2 If a faculty member who has been awarded a FFL declines the leave for any reason before its implementation, the university will give the award to an alternative candidate, as decided by the university FFL committee.

3.14.3 Faculty members who are awarded FFLs and then choose not to use them cannot defer the leave beyond the current academic year, but can reapply in subsequent years, unbound by the restrictions of section 3.8.

3.15 Format

3.15.1 All FFL proposals must be submitted in the format appended to this

document.

3.16 Review Process

- 3.16.1 The FFL applications are first reviewed by a department committee which provides its recommendation and justification to be sent forward according to a timetable in section 3.16. The FFL application is a university-wide, competitive process. Recommendations from the department committee informs but is not binding on the university committee decisions to award FFLs.
- 3.16.2 After review by the department committee, the proposal is reviewed by the Department Chair and College Dean, each of whom provides a recommendation with justification. All applications must move through all levels of review to the university FFL committee and must be accompanied by the [University Funded Faculty Leave Program Proposal Format form](#).
- 3.16.3 The university FFL committee then sends their recommendations to the SVPAA/Provost according to the timetable in section 3.16.

3.17 Timetable

- 3.17.1 The timetable for FFL application is as follows. If any due date falls on a university holiday, it is moved to the next work day.
- 3.17.2 No later than August 15:

Appointment of university FFL committee by the Senior Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs/Provost in accordance with shared governance procedures and following Faculty Senate procedures. The university FFL committee consists of one faculty representative from each academic department, elected via Faculty Senate procedures in the preceding spring semester. Members of the university FFL committee will serve two-year staggered terms.

- 3.17.3 No later than the third Monday in September:

The FFL committee elects a chair and reviews the call for applications and rubric; the chair will notify the Provost of his/her election. The Senior Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs/Provost's office notifies the members of the university FFL committee of the number of university funded faculty leave grants available. The chair, in turn, announces this information, along with the timeline for application and requirements, to the UHD faculty community.

3.17.4 First Monday in November:

By this date, each department should form a sub-committee from its rank and tenure committee to serve as the department FFL committee. The size of this committee is to be determined by the department, but every effort should be made to see that it has a representative of each discipline in the department. Faculty who intend to submit FFL proposals are not eligible to serve on the committee. A chair for the department FFL committee should be chosen and announced to the department. All FFL proposals should be submitted to the chair of the department FFL committee.

3.17.5 Second Monday in November: Applications For Leave Are Due

3.17.5.1 At this time, applicants must submit the following materials:

3.17.3.1.1 A complete application to their departmental FFL committee; during this review, the department committee may offer feedback for strengthening the proposal prior to final review by department committee.

3.17.3.1.2 A notice of application to the applicant's Department Chair, College Dean, and the chair of the university FFL committee. Formats for these submissions are included in the [University Funded Faculty Leave Program Proposal Format form](#) to this policy statement.

3.17.6 No Later than Second Monday in December:

Department FFL committee writes a statement for each candidate justifying their decision to either recommend or not recommend funding based on the criteria set forth in Section 1.2. The committee forwards the statement and [Recommendation and Signature Form](#) along with all applications to the Department Chair.

3.17.7 No later than the Second Monday in January:

Department Chair completes the appropriate section of the [Recommendation and Signature Form](#) for each candidate justifying his/her decision to either recommend or not recommend funding based on the criteria set forth in Section 1.2. The Chair forwards this letter along with all applications and department FFL committee statement to the College Dean.

3.17.8 No later than the First Monday in February

The College Dean completes the appropriate section of the [Recommendation](#)

[and Signature Form](#) for each candidate justifying his/her decision to either recommend or not recommend funding based on the criteria set forth in Section 1.2. The Dean forwards the [University Funded Faculty Leave Program Proposal Format form](#) to the Chair of the university FFL committee and to each applicant.

3.17.9 No later than the Second Monday in March:

University FFL committee sends its recommendation for finalists to the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs/Provost for review, along with all candidate files. If there is a viable alternate slate of candidates, these names should be included in the recommendations. The university FFL committee should also send a summary statement that describes strengths and weaknesses of the pool of applicants as well as any special considerations required to determine final rankings; this statement will be sent to all applicants along with the final decisions. If the SVPAA/Provost determines any modifications to the recommendations need to be made, he/she will consult the university FFL committee.

3.17.10 Third Monday in March:

The SVPAA/Provost notifies all applicants, chairs, deans, the President and the Chair of university FFL committee of the award decisions. The FFL committee will announce Faculty Leave award recipients at the Faculty Awards Ceremony.

3.17.11 Last class day of the first long semester following the completion of a funded faculty leave:

Faculty members granted funded faculty leave must submit a written report of activities undertaken while on leave to the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs/Provost and responsible Dean and Department Chair. The format for this report is in the [University Funded Faculty Leave Final Report Format](#). This report must be made available to the university community via university/college website.

3.18 Exceptions

- 3.18.1 The Senior Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs/Provost may modify the timetable for unusual circumstances; in this case, the Senior Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs/Provost should send the new timetable or approval of proposed time table (e.g., from the committee) in writing to all parties in the process.

4. PROCEDURES

Procedures for this policy are imbedded in the Policy section.

5. REVIEW PROCESS

Responsible Parties: Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost (SVPAA)
and Assistant VP of Research & Sponsored Programs

Review: Every two years on or before October 1st.

Signed original on file in Employment Services and Operations.

6. POLICY HISTORY

Issue # 3: 12/12/1986

Issue # 4: 06/27/2014

Issue dates for previous versions are unavailable.

7. REFERENCES

[PS 02.A.05 - Additional Compensation for Faculty and Exempt Staff](#)

[PS 02.A.04 Consulting and Paid Professional Service](#)

[PS 10.A.01 – Rank and Tenure System](#)

[PS 10.A.14 – Faculty Leaves Not Funded by the University](#)

[University Funded Faculty Leave Program Proposal Format form](#)

[Recommendation and Signature Form](#)

[University Funded Faculty Leave Final Report Format](#)

[SAM 02.D.04](#)