

3.3 LEAVES OF ABSENCE

The university may allow professors and academic staff to take leave from appointed responsibilities under certain circumstances, including arrangements that support balance between family life and university responsibilities. Cornell policy promotes academic leave management, which is a collegial approach intended to foster, within appropriate limits, situations of mutual benefit to the academic employee and the university's academic program. Please reference the Leaves for Professors and Academic Staff policy available online at

<http://www.dfa.cornell.edu/dfa/cms/treasurer/policyoffice/policies/volumes/humanresources/leaves.cfm>.

In general, a leave of absence is a planned period of relief from normal duties. In all leaves of absence, with or without salary, the stability of the academic program takes precedence over the advantages to the individual.

When an academic employee travels for Cornell University, attends a professional meeting, presents a seminar at another institution, consults as permitted for professors, or engages in a Cornell academic program off-campus, a leave of absence is not required. If an employee travels for personal reasons or for recreation for a period that would interfere with normal duties, a leave of absence should be requested. An academic employee who is planning an extended leave of absence—for example, by applying for external support such as a fellowship—should obtain the prior approval of the department chairperson, and additional approvals as may be necessary.

Authority for approving a leave of absence varies with the situation. The department chair may approve in writing two weeks or less of leave. Leaves of more than two weeks and as long as one year, with or without salary, can be granted by the dean. Leaves or leave combinations that exceed one year require the further approval of the provost.

While academic leaves may be used to accommodate professors who take temporary positions elsewhere, such leaves are not normally appropriate for individuals who accept tenured appointments at other institutions. A decision by the dean to grant academic leave in such circumstances requires compelling justification, and the leave should not, in any event, exceed one year from the date the Cornell faculty member assumes a tenured appointment at another institution.

As a condition of leave approval, academic management may specify a date for formal notification of intention to return to the university. Such a consideration may pertain when an academic employee is considering an external offer and a notification timeframe is necessary for academic planning.

Study Leave

Variations exist among colleges regarding study leave and each college that offers study leaves should have a statement of policy approved by the provost. A professor interested in taking a study leave should consult the department chair's office.

Upon recommendation from the appropriate academic dean or director, the dean may relieve an assistant, associate or full professor of teaching duties for one full term so that the professor may pursue uninterrupted study and/or research. A study leave is for one semester at full salary and may not normally come within two years of another kind of leave. Study leave may never be combined with a sabbatical leave, and only one study leave may be taken between sabbatical leaves. To be eligible, the professor must have carried an unusually heavy teaching load for at least six consecutive terms and be judged to have had opportunities for scholarly development thereby impaired.

Normally the study leave is taken during the term that immediately follows three years of uninterrupted teaching. Requested at least one term in advance, it is for one term only and cannot be combined with other leaves or taken in the final term of university service.

A faculty member must submit a specific plan of study and/or research with the application for a study leave. The plan must provide for meeting the teaching responsibilities during the leave period without requiring additional staff appointments – perhaps by the faculty member's increasing his or her teaching load just before or after the leave. The period of leave must be used for study or personal research and not for outside consulting or other nonuniversity endeavors.

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Professional Development Leave

Professional development leave may be authorized by a college to allow individuals holding certain non-tenure track academic titles to pursue professional development opportunities that offer significant potential benefit to the unit's academic or research programs. Such leaves are approved at the discretion of the department chair and the dean and are subject to available funding, the ongoing academic needs of the unit, and related considerations.

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Prestigious Fellowship Leave

The university continues to provide the university share of contributions toward certain benefits for eligible professorial staff in the endowed colleges who go on leave without salary for up to one year as recipient of one of the highly competitive prestigious fellowships named in an approved list. Details may be found online at

https://www.dfa.cornell.edu/sites/default/files/policy/vol6_2_1_0.pdf

Intergovernmental Personnel Act (IPA) Leave

The 1970 Intergovernmental Personnel Act (IPA), legislated for the mutual benefit of institutions of higher education and federal agencies, allows an academic employee to be placed on leave with salary to accept a temporary governmental position at a federal agency's invitation. The federal government reimburses the university for the costs of salary and benefits. Details may be found on the online policy website

<http://www.dfa.cornell.edu/dfa/cms/treasurer/policyoffice/policies/volumes/humanresources/leaves.cfm> .

Military Training Leave

Academics who are members of any United States Armed Forces reserve unit are granted paid leaves for purposes of annual training exercises or if called to active duty. The duration and benefits change to comply with changes in regulatory guidelines. Following the paid leave, a military leave without salary may be granted. ~~Information~~ reflected in the Human Resources online policy at

<http://www.dfa.cornell.edu/dfa/cms/treasurer/policyoffice/policies/volumes/humanresources/leaves.cfm> .

Academic policy, which refers to the Human Resources policy, may be found online at <http://www.dfa.cornell.edu/dfa/cms/treasurer/policyoffice/policies/volumes/humanresources/leaves.cfm> .

Cornell Academic Parental Leave

Cornell academic parental leave provides one semester of partial relief with full salary for the primary or co-equal care-giving parent in an eligible Cornell academic appointment as determined through college policy. The primary or co-equal care-giving parent is one who has significant responsibility for the care of a child and those responsibilities interfere substantially with academic responsibilities. If the child is adopted or placed for foster care, the child must be younger than five years old for the parent to qualify. Details about college policy may be obtained from the office of the department chair or the dean. General aspects of policy and examples of leave options in family care or self-care situations are available on the online policy website at

<http://www.dfa.cornell.edu/dfa/cms/treasurer/policyoffice/policies/volumes/humanresources/leaves.cfm> .

For a parent of a newborn or during an adopted or foster child's first year in the household, when duties as primary or co-equal care-giving parent call tenure-track faculty members away from their work, the university will provide, on request, automatic extension of the tenure clock for up to two semesters. Similarly, in situations beyond those of primary care-giving parent where parenting duties interfere substantially with progress in the academic program, tenure-clock extensions may be requested through the department chair for approval by the dean and the provost. Those participating in the tenure review process are directed not to allow the professor's use of Cornell academic parental leave or family-related tenure-clock extensions to be a negative element or to have a negative influence in the evaluation of any candidate for tenure.

Family and Medical Leave (F&ML)

The federal mandate for leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act is for unpaid leave (unless other paid leave is substituted) for a family or personal situation that qualifies. Cornell offers paid leave, such as Cornell academic parental leave, short-term medical leave, and long-term disability, that makes it possible to take advantage of F&ML's protections without necessarily losing salary. Details may be found online at

<http://www.dfa.cornell.edu/dfa/cms/treasurer/policyoffice/policies/volumes/humanresources/leaves.cfm> .

Other Leaves of Absence

Leaves of absence without salary do not extend the period of a term appointment, but leaves with salary may be counted as time accrued for sabbatic leaves. Whether the leave time is counted as part of the six years within which a tenure decision on an assistant professor must be made is to be defined by an explicit written understanding between the chairperson and faculty member, approved and signed by the dean, and filed with the Office of Workforce Policy and Labor Relations.

During leaves without salary, eligibility for Cornell Children's Tuition Scholarship benefits continues for only one semester. The employee may continue life, accident, and health insurance coverage by paying premiums (both the employee's and employer's share) to the Office of Human Resources, with the exception of employees in the contract units paying their health insurance to the New York State Department of Civil Service. University contributions to the Cornell University Retirement Plan or the SUNY-ORP cease. The employee continues to have the opportunity to make his or her own contributions, but those contributions will not be tax-deferred. If the employee returns at the end of an approved leave without salary, the academic unit is obliged to restore his or her original post if the term of appointment has not expired, unless a different arrangement was agreed upon before the leave. The academic unit is not

obliged to pay the salary of an employee who returns before the expiration of the approved leave.