

**Proposition:** 17-11/12

**Sponsors:** Nancy Baptiste (CT/Ed), Cindy Murrell (CT/A&S), Ben Taylor (CT/Bus), Del Jimenez (CT/CES), Abby Train (CT/A&S), Deb McCormick (CT/DACC), Azadeh Osanloo (Ed), Nancy Oretskin (Bus), Liz Schirmer (A&S), Tim Ketelaar (A &S)

**Proposed Committee Assignment:** Faculty Affairs

**Assigned Committee:** Scholastic Affairs 4/17/12

**Passed ADAC:**

**Passed ADC:**

**Title:** Proposal to Amend Sabbatical Leave Policy to Include College Faculty

**Proposal:**

This proposal modifies subsection B. "Qualifications and Options" of Section 7.20.70 of the Policy Manual to allow nontenure-track faculty at NMSU's community colleges, main campus, and extension service to apply for sabbaticals on the same terms that apply to tenured faculty.

**Current Policy:**

**7.20.70 Leaves - Sabbatical**

- A. Purpose: The purpose of a sabbatical leave is to promote professional growth and increased competence among faculty members by subsidizing significant study and research, creative work, or some other program which is judged to be of equivalent value and which cannot be accomplished during the fulfillment of normal academic duties and responsibilities. All departments and colleges including community colleges are encouraged to participate fully in the sabbatical program.
- B. Qualifications and Options: Application for sabbatical leave may be made by any tenured full-time faculty member (above the rank of instructor) with at least 12 regular semesters of full-time service at the university without a sabbatical. A faculty member who is in the last year of the probationary period may be considered for sabbatical leave if a favorable decision on tenure has already been made. Sabbatical leave may be taken in conjunction with earned annual leave, personal leave, or educational leave without pay. Personal leave and educational leave without pay must comply with university policies. In instances where, for good and sufficient institutional reasons, a sabbatical leave is delayed (not to exceed 2 years), the faculty member will become eligible for a succeeding sabbatical leave after an equivalently reduced period. A faculty member should be given as much notice as possible if a sabbatical leave cannot be approved for the time frame requested. Sabbatical leave is available under the following options:
  - 1. One semester at no reduction in annual salary.
  - 2. One full contract year at 60 percent salary (Those within 5 years of retirement should consult the Employee Benefits Office about the possible negative impact on the retirement benefit formula.)
  - 3. Semester II (spring) of 1 year and Semester I (fall) of the following year, at 30 percent annual salary for each semester of leave.

When a person has served as both a 9-month and 12-month employee in the 6-year period immediately prior to the requested sabbatical, the amount of time allotted for the sabbatical will be prorated. A faculty member employed on a continuing basis on a 12-month contract may take a 6-month leave at full salary or a 12-month leave at 60 percent salary.

### **Proposed Changes:**

Amend subsection B of Section 7.20.70 of the Policy Manual to delete the word “tenured” (see track changes below). The second sentence of subsection B applies only to tenure-track faculty. That sentence could be deleted if not considered necessary, or it could be clarified by the addition of the word “tenure-track” inserted in the proposed text below.

### **7.20.70 Leaves - Sabbatical**

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- B. Qualifications and Options: Application for sabbatical leave may be made by any ~~tenured~~ full-time faculty member (above the rank of instructor) with at least 12 regular semesters of full-time service at the university without a sabbatical. A **tenure-track** faculty member who is in the last year of the probationary period may be considered for sabbatical leave if a favorable decision on tenure has already been made. Sabbatical leave may be taken in conjunction with earned annual leave, personal leave, or educational leave without pay. Personal leave and educational leave without pay must comply with university policies. In instances where, for good and sufficient institutional reasons, a sabbatical leave is delayed (not to exceed 2 years), the faculty member will become eligible for a succeeding sabbatical leave after an equivalently reduced period. A faculty member should be given as much notice as possible if a sabbatical leave cannot be approved for the time frame requested. Sabbatical leave is available under the following options:

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### **Rationale:**

According to the Policy Manual (7.20.70A): “The purpose of a sabbatical leave is to promote professional growth and increased competence among faculty members by subsidizing

significant study and research, creative work, or some other program which is judged to be of equivalent value and which cannot be accomplished during the fulfillment of normal academic duties and responsibilities. All departments and colleges including community colleges are encouraged to participate fully in the sabbatical program.”

Policies available online indicate that a number of our peer institutions, including University of Arizona, University of Nevada at Reno, Kansas State University, Montana State University, and University of Idaho, allow sabbaticals for regular continuing academic faculty who are not eligible for tenure.

NMSU college faculty are regular employees subject to evaluation and eligible for promotion. In many departments and colleges, college faculty produce a large percentage of student credit hours and have a strong impact on student retention. Many have terminal degrees, and in some employing units, they make critical contributions to research or administration. In addition to making a substantial contribution to NMSU’s teaching mission, many college faculty provide leadership to NMSU for decades by administering programs, developing curricula, mentoring students and new faculty, and engaging in and disseminating research.

Although individual college faculty are often not assigned the entire range of duties required of a tenure-track faculty member, the diversity of college faculty responsibilities as a group is similar to the range of activities of tenure-track faculty. Therefore, sabbaticals for college faculty will produce benefits for the university similar to those secured by sabbaticals for tenured faculty.

Under NMSU’s current policy, nontenure-track faculty are eligible for leave with pay only on narrow terms: “normally for the purpose of taking coursework toward a degree, professional licensure or certificate which is related to the individual’s university job assignment” (7.20.35). Although unpaid professional leave as described in Section 7.20.60 of the Policy Manual is not restricted to tenured faculty, most faculty cannot afford to take unpaid leave. Even if professors were able to forgo pay for a time to pursue projects that would enhance their value to NMSU, there is little precedent for assuring that a nontenure-track faculty member taking professional leave would be able to return to the same position.

Under this proposal, college faculty will be able to submit sabbatical proposals for research, writing, creative projects, and professional learning. College faculty whose primary responsibility is teaching may propose sabbatical projects similar to those that have proved productive for tenured community college faculty: industry training, the creation of new degree plans, or curricular-based projects devoted to pedagogy, assessment, or retention.

The same application requirements, procedures, and obligations outlined in Section 7.20.70 of the Policy Manual for tenured faculty sabbaticals will apply to college faculty sabbaticals.

In accordance with current policy (Policy Manual 7.20.70C), this proposal will not guarantee sabbatical leave approval for any individual faculty member, but it will allow administrators the flexibility to approve sabbatical proposals that will benefit the university and our students upon the faculty member’s return.

The opportunity to apply for sabbaticals will encourage professional development and institutional loyalty among NMSU's college faculty.