**Policy Number:** E18.0 *(Will be presented at the September 20, 2012 AS meeting)*

**Policy Name:** FACULTY LEAVE FOR PROFESSIONAL/CAREER DEVELOPMENT

**Scope:** Full-time tenured faculty with a minimum of six years of service.

1. **Purpose**

The purpose of a faculty leave for professional/career development is to encourage and assist an individual to become a more valuable member of the university by engaging in some form of advanced study, writing, research, or other creative activity.

2. **Eligibility**

The candidate for leave shall have served as a full-time member of the faculty for a minimum of six years. Only tenured faculty are eligible for a faculty leave. If a pre-tenure faculty are eligible to apply for a leave, then approval for a professional leave is contingent upon the granting of tenure. After having been granted a leave, a faculty member will again become eligible for a leave only after serving six years as a full-time faculty member at the university, dating from the end of the academic year during which the previous leave took place.

The professional development leave of absence is not guaranteed to an individual by the university. Such a leave is a privilege and not a right of employment. The mere completion of the minimum number of years of employment does not in itself justify the expectation of leave.

3. **Administration of Leave for Professional Development**

   a) **Application**

The applicant shall file an application for professional leave with the academic department chair on or before October 1 of the academic year prior to that in which the leave is requested. This shall contain the following:

1. The application for leave form;
2. A proposal that shall not exceed six pages, plus appendices, and shall include, at a minimum, the following:
   a) A summary of planned activities during the leave;
   b) The benefit of the leave to the university and to the professional development of the faculty member;
   c) The resources needed to accomplish the objectives of the leave; and,
   d) The expected outcomes, deliverables, or achievements from the leave.

By October 15, the academic department head shall forward the application to the dean with a recommendation for approval/disapproval, as well as a statement as to how the leave would affect the operation of the department.
By November 1, the dean shall then forward the application with the academic department chair and the dean’s comments and recommendations for approval/disapproval to the provost.

By November 15, the provost will refer all applications to the Committee on Professional Development Leave.

b) The Committee on Professional Development Leave

The provost shall convene the Committee on Professional Development Leave consisting of: two academic administrators (deans or academic department chairs) appointed by the provost; and three faculty members with the rank of associate professor or professor appointed by the Academic Senate. No college shall have more than one member on the committee. The committee shall elect its own chair. The provost’s appointees serve staggered two-year terms and the Academic Senate appointees serve staggered three-year terms. The Academic Senate will identify its appointee(s) prior to the provost’s appointment(s).

c) Evaluation of Request for Leave

The principal criteria used by the committee in evaluating candidates’ applications will be:

1. The merit of the plan submitted;
2. The contribution of the proposal to the faculty member's professional/career objectives;
3. The individual's past and potential contribution to the university.

By December 15, the committee will submit to the provost a list, in recommended order of merit, of those faculty members whose proposals it deems worthy and in the best interest of the university. The committee will also indicate those applicants whose absence, according to administrative officers, would seriously hamper the operation of the department. Likewise, the committee will indicate those applications they do not recommend.

By January 5, the provost shall forward to the president the recommendations of the committee together with the provost’s own comments and recommendations.

By January 31, the provost shall announce final decisions, as confirmed by the president, regarding professional leaves. In cases where leaves are not approved, applicants will receive an explanation of the reason(s) their leaves were denied.

d) Length of Leave, Compensation and Benefits during Leave

Usually, a faculty member on academic year contract (9.5 months) would be eligible for leave and compensation as follows:
1. Two semester leave at 50% of regular academic year (9.5-month) salary.
2. One semester leave at 100% pay for the 9.5-month period.

A faculty member on a 12-month contract would be eligible for leave and compensation as follows:

1. Full year leave, including summer, at 50% of the 12-month salary.
2. One semester leave (fall, spring, or summer) at 100% pay for the 12-month period.

The president and the board of trustees, however, reserve the right to deal with each case individually in regards to the length of leave and compensation.

Benefits shall be continued during the leave. Contributions to the retirement plan will be based on the actual salary paid to the faculty member during the leave. A faculty member may accept other grants, awards, or income during a leave, but must remain in compliance with RIT’s Individual Conflict of Interest and Commitment Policy (C4.0).

e) Cancellation or Deferment of an Approved Leave

In certain circumstances, a faculty member may need to cancel or defer an already approved leave. In these circumstances, the faculty member shall submit a request for change in the approved leave to his or her department chair. The department chair shall forward the request, along with his/her recommendation, to the dean. The dean shall forward the request, along with the department chair’s recommendation and his or recommendation to the provost. The provost, after consultation with the president, shall notify the faculty member of the decision regarding the change to the approved leave.

An approved leave may be deferred for no more than one year. If the approved leave is deferred for more than one year, the faculty may be required to resubmit his or her application for leave through the regular process described in Section 3 of this policy.

f) Obligations for Further Service

Once the request for professional development leave has been approved, the provost will notify the recipient in writing of specific conditions of the leave. Specific information about salary and benefits during the leave will be sent to the recipient by Human Resources.

The recipient of a professional development leave is obligated to return to the university for a period of one academic year following the leave period. If this obligation is not met, the recipient must refund any payments received during the leave. The terms of repayment shall be specified in writing. Usually, repayment must be made within five years.

g) Summary of Accomplishments
Within two months after returning to the university, the individual shall transmit through the academic department head and the dean to the provost a report of professional activities and accomplishments during the leave.

**Responsible Office:** Academic Senate and the Office of the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs. Inquiries can be directed to:

**Academic Senate:**
- Staff Assistant
- 2106 Eastman Hall
- asenate@rit.edu
- (585)475-2016

**Office of the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs:**
- Assistant Vice President
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- Approved November 25, 1963
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- **Approved April 26, 2012**