

Eastman School of Music
**Academic Leaves of Absence
Guidelines**

Academic leaves of absence are intended to benefit the Eastman School of Music and the University of Rochester by strengthening the creative activity and research productivity of tenured or tenure-track faculty members (see the Faculty Handbook for a fuller discussion of the University's leave policies). An academic leave recognizes the importance to faculty of having time for scholarship and creative works, but is not an entitlement. It requires the Provost's approval following a recommendation of the department chair, the Senior Associate Dean of Academic and Student Affairs, and the Dean.

The following guidelines apply to *academic leaves of absence*. This information does not apply to requests for *personal leaves*.

Eligibility

Tenured Faculty: Tenured faculty members are generally eligible for one semester of academic leave with full salary, or for one year of academic leave with half salary, for every six years of full-time service in residence performing regular duties. Eligibility for academic leaves does not accrue beyond six years.

Junior Faculty: An Assistant Professor whose work is progressing well may be granted academic leave of up to two semesters. Any academic leave approved for junior faculty has no effect on the tenure clock, and must be taken early enough that the work undertaken during the leave can be expected to benefit the promotion and/or tenure case. University support would typically be obtained through application for a Junior Faculty Leave, a program for which untenured faculty become eligible after a successful Reappointment Review.

A Junior Faculty Leave is intended to encourage the research and scholarship of those who show real promise of becoming tenured members of faculty. Such a leave supports a semester of leave at full salary, or an academic year at half salary.

Leave of Absence Requests

A leave request originates with the faculty member, and requires the endorsement of the department chair. Since a leave will generally entail some adjustment to teaching schedules, requests should be discussed with the chair as far in advance as possible. If the faculty member's absence cannot readily be accommodated during the semester or year under discussion, the leave may best be postponed.

Leave requests are due to the Department Chair by November 15 of the year preceding the academic year for which the leave is requested. The Department Chair's recommendation is due to the Senior Associate Dean of Academic and Student Affairs by December 15. Exceptional unforeseen opportunities that arise after the deadline will be considered on a case-by-case basis. The Senior Associate Dean of Academic and Student Affairs' recommendations are reviewed by the Dean and forwarded to the Provost by February 1. The Senior Associate Dean of Academic and Student Affairs will notify the faculty member of the outcome, generally in late spring.

Any faculty member requesting a leave of absence is expected to seek outside salary support to supplement that provided by the University. Regardless of how a leave is supported, a faculty member may not normally be on academic leave for more than four semesters in any five-year period. Where the chair and Senior Associate Dean of Academic and Student Affairs consider it to be in the interests of Eastman, they may recommend leaves at greater than normal frequency.

Application

The following points should be addressed in the Application for Leave of Absence:

The faculty member must provide a brief narrative account of the scholarly or creative work to be undertaken, why a leave is necessary to pursue it, and how Eastman and the University will benefit from the results of it. External support is an important testimonial to the distinction of the faculty member's work, and can often provide resources beyond those available from the University. The faculty member should explain what external support has been sought or obtained to support the proposed work; if no support has been sought, this should be explained.

The chair should explain why she or he does or does not endorse the leave request. In the former case the chair should also explain how the leave is expected to benefit the department, Eastman, and the University. The chair should also describe how the faculty member's normal teaching obligations will be met during the leave. If faculty members within the department cannot readily assume teaching obligations, this should be clearly indicated. Where two or more faculty members of the department request leave in the same academic year, the chair should rank order the requests, taking account of both the benefits to the department and any difficulties caused by a faculty member's absence. A chair who is applying for a leave should submit his/her application directly to the Senior Associate Dean of Academic and Student Affairs.

Senior Associate Dean of Academic and Student Affairs' Review

The single most important criterion for evaluating an academic leave of absence request will be the merit of the proposed project. Merit will be determined by the value the leave is likely to bring back, directly or indirectly, to the Eastman School of Music in terms of recruitment, improved teaching, institutional prestige and publicity, retention of faculty, and other factors.

In reviewing leave requests, the Senior Associate Dean of Academic and Student Affairs will consider the expected benefit to Eastman and the University in the context of the faculty member's plan for how the leave will be spent, the faculty member's annual activity reports, and the chair's annual performance reviews. The outcome of any prior leave, the priority given to the request by the chair, and the expected effect of the faculty member's absence on the department will also be considered. The Senior Associate Dean of Academic and Student Affairs will review the applications with the Dean prior to making formal recommendations to the Provost. Chairs will be informed of the recommendation(s) to the Provost for faculty members in his/her department.

Salary and Benefits Considerations

Acceptance of University support towards salary and/or benefits places an obligation on the recipient to return to the University at the end of the leave.

Faculty members on a leave of absence at full salary are paid on the normal schedule and receive full benefits. Faculty members on leave at less than full salary are paid a prorated salary on the normal schedule. Faculty members are advised to consult the Benefits Office about the effect of a leave on other benefits that are a function of salary.

Post-leave Report

At the end of the academic leave, the recipient should provide a written report of the outcome of the leave: publications, scholarship or creative work, and the anticipated impact the leave has on both future research and teaching. This report should be submitted to the department chair and the Senior Associate Dean of Academic and Student Affairs by the beginning of the semester immediately following the leave period.

(revised: October 2017)