

SUL ROSS STATE UNIVERSITY

A Member of the Texas State University System

SRSU Policy: Faculty Development Leave Program

SRSU Policy ID: FH 2.17

Policy Reviewed by: Executive Vice President and Provost

Approval Authority: President of the University

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Next Review Date: July 18, 2028

The administration of Sul Ross State University is committed to faculty excellence in instruction, research, and service. To promote educational excellence, the university provides opportunities for faculty-development leave.

A. Policy

1. Texas Higher Education Code, Sections 51.101 through 51.108 (*Vernon's Civil Statutes*) provides for faculty-development leaves of absence, and the Sul Ross State University policy and procedure conform to the legislative direction: the board of regents may grant a faculty-development leave of absence for study, research, writing, field observations, or other suitable purposes to a faculty member within the constraints of the legislation.
2. Two types of leave of absence may be granted: (1) leave with pay and (2) leave without pay, both of which provide a guarantee of employment on return at the same status as before the person went on leave. The time on leave with pay counts as credit toward university service.
3. Faculty Development Leave with Pay may be granted for one academic year at one-half of an academic-year faculty salary, or a leave with pay may be granted for one semester at one-half a semester's faculty salary. An academic year is defined as the regular nine-month period; summer sessions are not included.
4. A faculty member on faculty-development leave may accept a grant for study, research, or travel from any institution of higher education; from a charitable, religious, or educational corporation or foundation; from any business enterprise; or from any federal, state, or local governmental agency. An accounting of all grants will be made to the board of regents of the institution by the faculty member. A faculty member on faculty-development leave may not accept employment from any other person, corporation, government, or institution of higher education unless the governing board determines that it would be in the public interest to do so and expressly approves the employment.
5. No more than six percent of the faculty members may be on faculty-development leave at any one time. The SRSU executive vice president and provost will inform the Faculty Affairs Council and the Rio Grande College Faculty Senate of the number of applicants for leave which will be considered for any particular period.

SUL ROSS STATE UNIVERSITY

A Member of the Texas State University System

B. Eligible Applicants

1. All full-time faculty members holding the rank of instructor or higher and who have completed (1) at least four consecutive academic years of service at the university by the effective date of the leave and (2) at least six years of service since their last faculty development leave with pay are eligible.
2. The state code defines a faculty member as "a person who is employed by an institution of higher education on a full-time basis as a member of the faculty or staff and whose duties include teaching, research, administration, including professional librarians, or the performance of professional services. However, the term does not include a person employed in a position which is in the institution's classified personnel system."
3. Applicants may request development leaves to "engage in study, research, writing, and similar projects for the purpose of adding to the knowledge available to himself, his students, his institution, and society generally." The applicant's objective may be to develop materials for teaching, to contribute to the prestige of SRSU, to advance knowledge, to provide professional growth, or to improve their abilities as a teacher.

C. Faculty Development Leave with Pay

1. A faculty member on faculty-development leave with pay will continue to be an active participant of the Teacher Retirement System of Texas or of the Optional Retirement Program. Contributions required to be paid to the TRS or to the ORP and any other amounts authorized will be deducted from the compensation of those faculty members on leave.
2. A member of the faculty on faculty-development leave with pay is a faculty member for purposes of participating in the programs and of receiving the benefits made available by or through the institution or the state to faculty members. A member of the faculty on faculty-development leave without pay may maintain membership in university insurance programs by submitting the premiums to the Office of Personnel.
3. A faculty member seeking leave with pay must submit an application to their academic department head in accordance with the deadline established by the Faculty Affairs Council or the Rio Grande College Faculty Senate and publicized by the executive vice president and provost on the academic calendar.
4. Faculty members on development leave with pay must sign a legal agreement to serve one full academic year after completion of the leave. If the faculty member should refuse to fulfill the year of service after the leave, the faculty member will be required to reimburse the university in the amount he or she received as salary or fringe benefits from the state while on leave.

SUL ROSS STATE UNIVERSITY

A Member of the Texas State University System

5. Each recipient of a faculty-development leave with pay must submit a written report of their activity while on leave to the office of the executive vice president and provost.
6. Under this program, development leaves with pay are not available to support completion of an advanced degree.

D. Faculty Development Leave without Pay

1. Faculty-development leave without pay may be granted for either one academic year or one semester. (An academic year is defined as the regular nine-month period; summer sessions are not included.) When the purpose of the leave is among those listed under Faculty Development Leave with Pay (2.17C, above), the faculty member is subject to the same restrictions and is eligible to participate in programs and receive benefits made available by or through the institution or the state to faculty members in the same manner as a faculty member on development leave with pay; however, when the purpose of the development leave without pay is to complete an advanced degree or for another personal or business-related reason, the faculty member's time of absence from the university will not be counted toward service and longevity required to become eligible for either tenure or promotion to the next rank.
2. Faculty members requesting development leave without pay will follow the same application process as faculty members requesting development leave with pay.

E. Application Process

1. Faculty Development Leave Application forms are located in the Appendix.
2. Applications for faculty-development leave must include:
 - a) a Faculty Development Application Form;
 - b) a detailed, current *curriculum vita* which includes education, related professional experience, courses taught at Sul Ross State University, contributions to SRSU (teaching and other activities, offices, awards, committee assignments), publications and creative activities, participation in international, national, and regional scholarly and professional organizations, and honors, certificates, professional licenses, and the like; and
 - c) a proposal not to exceed two pages describing the activity and specifying how the leave is expected to lead to the faculty member's development and how the leave will benefit Sul Ross State University and its students.
3. Upon receipt of applications by the department head or the dean of Library and

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Information Technologies, further routing will be as follows: dean, chair of Faculty Affairs Council for ranking and recommendation for funding by the committee or chair of the Rio Grande College Faculty Senate, and executive vice president and provost. Proposals from department heads are submitted directly to the appropriate dean. Each administrative unit may forward the proposal with or without comment.

4. Comments from chairpersons and deans should address program and curriculum matters only.

F. Evaluation and Approval of Applications

1. The Faculty Affairs Council shall meet to evaluate, rank, and recommend faculty leaves.
2. The Faculty Affairs Council will make its recommendations in writing to the executive vice president and provost, who will forward the recommendations to the president, who will make recommendations to the board of regents.