
Faculty Research Leave Program Policy

Version: 2.0

Responsible University Official: Provost

Effective Date: September 16, 2026

1.0 Introduction

The Faculty Research Leave Program (FRLP) complements sabbatical and developmental leaves available within the [Sabbatical and Developmental Leave Policy](#) by providing opportunities for extended research that:

- are not limited by the timing limitations applicable to sabbatical leaves and developmental leaves
- may be engaged in collaboratively with another SLU faculty member

Like the [Sabbatical and Developmental Leave Policy](#), the goals of this FRLP are to:

- support the University's research mission
- develop awardees' research agendas and allow them to compete more effectively for external funds (when appropriate), fellowships, etc.
- strengthen awardees' candidacy for promotion and/or tenure (as applicable)
- strengthen awardees' national or international standing as a recognized scholar

Because the purpose of the leave is to support research, scholarship, or creative work, the FRLP is not designed for course development support; however, consistent with the scope of sabbatical-eligible projects, faculty research leaves under this Policy may be used to advance a faculty member's research of teaching models and practices to achieve optimal student learning.

2.0 Scope

This Policy applies to Saint Louis University-employed full-time faculty members in colleges/schools reporting to the Provost, excluding the faculty of the University's Madrid Campus. This excludes all faculty of the School of Medicine.

3.0 Award Details

Each "Research Leave Award" granted under this Policy consists of up to two components:

1. Chair- and dean-approved release from previously assigned faculty work (e.g., teaching, research, service, etc.) such that *approximately* 85%-100% of the workload assignment under an approved award is devoted to the proposed research project. Additionally:

- The faculty member may not teach at Saint Louis University or any other college or university during the period of the leave.
 - The faculty member will continue to fulfill his/her responsibilities to any graduate advisees or find an alternative means for directing these students.
 - The faculty member may continue to fulfill his/her service commitments if the service would be significantly disrupted otherwise. Any activities to be continued during the leave period must be disclosed on the application.
2. A complementary research award of up to \$7,500, deposited in the budget of the awardee's governing department or college funded by the Provost Office. All research award funds must be expended in support of the research project and be approved as such by the administering college/school. Examples (not an exhaustive list) of both eligible and ineligible expenses include the following:

Eligible	Ineligible
Travel funds Conference fees Temporary access to a database	Copying, telephone, postage, office supplies, standard laboratory supplies, and other supplies regularly provided by departments/colleges/schools.

Any unused funds at the culmination of the approved project shall be returned to the Provost.

Annually, SLU will award a maximum of eight total faculty research leaves under this Policy, University-wide. Of those eight awards, four will be restricted to faculty holding the Assistant Professor rank; and the remaining four awards available annually are restricted to faculty holding the rank of either Associate Professor or Professor.

4.0 Eligibility

Note: Eligible applicants whose scholarly activity records do not evidence a sustained commitment to and success in research/scholarship commensurate with their rank and years in service at that rank are not likely to earn a faculty research leave award under this Policy.

- 4.1** All tenured, tenure-track, and non-tenure-track faculty members who, in the year of the proposed leave, will be assigned to either a "Teaching and Scholarship/Research" - or "Scholarship/Research Intensive"-level workload (per the [University Faculty Workload Policy](#)).
- 4.2** Faculty who, in the year of the proposed leave, will also hold administrative appointments as chairs, assistant/associate deans, or comparable positions, are ineligible for these awards.
- 4.3** Eligible faculty may apply for and earn multiple research leave awards; however, at least three full calendar years must elapse between FRLP award periods.

- 4.4** Applications from multiple faculty seeking to engage in jointly-conducted scholarship during a proposed leave may be submitted. These applications will be evaluated collectively as one single application. In terms of the total amount provided for a jointly-conducted project:
- If all faculty on the proposal are from the same primary discipline, the application will only be eligible for a maximum of a single \$7,500 award
 - *To incentivize interdisciplinary scholarship:* If all faculty on the proposal are from separate primary disciplines, the application will be eligible for a maximum of \$7,500 for each applicant (subject to the total award limitations detailed in Section 3.0)
- 4.5** Applications that present challenges to departmental staffing of necessary courses (per the chair and dean) that outweigh the benefits of the proposed research project (per the chair and dean) are not to be advanced by the chair or dean for approval (see “Procedures” below). Not all proposals are feasible given limited human and fiscal resources.
- Note: In some cases, proposals may be approved but for a different academic term than the one requested in the application, due to staffing and/or resource constraints.*
- 4.6** *For all faculty on 9–10-month contracts:* Leaves can be granted for either the Fall or Spring semester. *For all faculty on 11–12-month contracts:* Leaves can be granted for either the Fall or Spring semester, or for the Summer term.
- 4.7** Faculty Research Leaves may (only with the consent of the Provost) be approved to be taken in a term that immediately precedes or follows a term during which an otherwise-approved sabbatical or developmental leave will be taken.
- 4.8** A faculty member who receives a leave must return to the University after completion of the leave and remain in service until the completion of one academic year. Failure to do so makes the faculty member liable for reimbursing the University for the salary and benefits paid while s/he was on leave.

5.0 Proposal Development Instructions & Deadlines

Note: *Proposals will be evaluated in the context of the staffing needs of the applicant’s academic unit and must be approved by the chair (if applicable) and dean. Therefore, applicants are strongly encouraged to consult with their unit administrators before beginning to develop proposals. Final proposal approval rests with the Provost.*

- 5.1** There is no proposal form or template; proposals must, however, include each of the following:
- **Curriculum vitae** of no more than two pages that emphasizes publications, awards, and grants, and provides other information directly pertinent to the proposal

- **Narrative** of no more than four (4) pages that should be understandable to reviewers who may not be specialists in the applicant's area or discipline. The narrative must address:
 - The Research Project
 - The problem that will be addressed or the activity that will be undertaken and how this research fits within the larger field of study
 - The research methodology or project plan
 - The specific, measurable outcomes of the leave
 - Access to facilities and resources necessary for the completion of the project
 - The Faculty Member's Profile
 - How the project relates to the applicant's other research activities, his/her long-term research agenda, and the applicant's ability to conduct the proposed project
 - A listing of current external funding (if applicable)
 - Departmental Impact (as outlined by the chair or other as appropriate)
 - The departmental staffing plan while the faculty member is on leave
 - Any University responsibilities that the faculty member will maintain during the leave period
 - Summary of goals and outcomes of previously granted faculty research leaves under this Policy
- **Budget explanation and justification**
 - Travel and additional funds to support the research project should be articulated in the budget.
 - Expenses not eligible for funding include office supplies, standard laboratory supplies, software subscriptions, or durable software purchases.
- **Completed Faculty Research Leave Endorsement Form** which can be located [here](#) on the Faculty Policies' page under this Policy.

5.2 Only proposals that include (in a single PDF file) a completed Faculty Research Leave Endorsement Form are considered "complete" and, therefore, may be submitted for consideration. All *complete* proposals (a single PDF file) are to be submitted via the Office of the Provost's [dedicated Google Site for Faculty Affairs](#).

The submission deadline for all complete applications is December 1st of the academic year preceding the proposed leave.

Departments/colleges/schools are required to establish their own internal deadlines and processes for garnering necessary approvals (to be reflected on the Faculty Research Leave Endorsement Form) prior to formal submission to the Office of the Provost. All faculty should consult with their department chairperson (or comparable administrator) and dean's office for these unit-specific submission deadlines.

6.0 Evaluation Process

The following criteria will guide the approval of proposals:

1. the likelihood that the proposed project will make an important scholarly contribution,
2. the project's relationship to the University's research foci,
3. the applicant's record of research productivity,
4. the likelihood that the project will be completed, and
5. the staffing needs of the applicant's academic unit approved by the chair (where appropriate) and dean.

The Provost's decision on each application for leave will consider the recommendations/endorsements/approvals granted by the faculty's department/college/school, but will be based on the Provost's determination for what is in the University's best interests. The Provost's decision is final.

7.0 Reporting Requirement

Within three months of the leave's completion, awardees must submit a progress report to the Dean indicating the outcomes achieved during the leave. Extensions to complete/achieve any leave outcomes must be approved by the Provost before the leave period has expired. Awardees should report additional outcomes resulting from the leave to the Dean if they occur after the progress report has been submitted.

Satisfactory progress on specified outcomes will be a prerequisite for consideration for subsequent awards and other University-based research funds.

8.0 Approvals

This policy was:

1. Endorsed by: Provost Academic Leadership Council, September 15, 2026
2. Approved by the Provost: September 16, 2026