

RESOLUTION TO CLARIFY RESEARCH LEAVE POLICIES

WHEREAS, the university provides one-year at half salary (study-research leave) or one semester at full salary (research assignment), with benefits, for tenured faculty members and faculty members on continued appointment for intensive study or research that increases their professional competencies and scholarly or instructional contributions; and

WHEREAS, the current statement of eligibility for study-research leave in sections 3.8 and 4.9 of the *Faculty Handbook* is unclear as to whether faculty members must accrue six years or seven years of full-time service for eligibility; and

WHEREAS, a review of leave eligibility policies for peer institutions determined that six years of full-time service is the standard period of eligibility for most institutions; and

WHEREAS, the university encourages faculty members to seek and participate in competitive fellowship opportunities, Fulbright scholar programs, and scholarly residencies as part of the research leave experience, but sections 3.9 and 4.10 of the *Faculty Handbook* do not provide adequate guidance on how special stipends or reimbursement for travel and other expenses should be dealt with, especially while on full-pay research assignment; and

WHEREAS, study-research and research assignment leave are intended to serve primarily those faculty members with academic instructional and research obligations; continued appointment faculty members with significant instructional and scholarly productivity obligations would be eligible for such leaves in support of these responsibilities;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that sections 3.8, 3.9, 4.9, and 4.10 of the *Faculty Handbook* be revised and corrected as indicated in the attached text (deleted text is crossed out; new text is in red).

RECOMMENDATION:

That the attached revisions and corrections to the text pertaining to research leaves in sections 3.8, 3.9, 4.9, and 4.10 of the *Faculty Handbook* be approved.

March 28, 2011

(Excerpts from Section 3.8, Study-Research Leave, concerning eligibility):

~~Full-time~~ tenured faculty members, ~~or faculty members on continued appointment,~~ with the rank of ~~assistant~~ **associate** professor or higher, ~~holding full-time faculty appointments and~~ having accrued a minimum of six years of service, are eligible to ~~request~~ **request** for study-research leaves. ~~Following a period of study-research leave, such a leave,~~ an additional six years of ~~full-time~~ **full-time** service ~~is~~ **are** necessary before a faculty member ~~is eligible~~ **may be considered** for another ~~research assignment or study-research~~ **research** leave. ~~Requests may be submitted prior to completion of six years of service, but faculty members must have completed the sixth year before the leave period begins. Tenure-track faculty members are not eligible to apply for study-research leave until after tenure has been awarded.~~

Instead of a proposal for a leave of a full academic or calendar year, faculty members may propose a sequence of semester leave periods at half-salary over several years, not to exceed totally one academic year (for a faculty member on academic year appointment) or 12 months (for a faculty member on calendar year appointment). If such a sequence of leaves is undertaken, all intervening periods of full-time appointment at Virginia Tech accrue toward the six-year minimum service required before ~~eligibility for consideration of a proposal for~~ **eligibility for** another study-research leave or sequence of leaves.

(Excerpt from Section 3.8, Study-Research Leave, concerning additional compensation):

Recipients of a study-research leave may receive additional compensation from other approved sources up to a total equal to their annual salary from the university. ~~Faculty members may receive the additional half salary from sponsored grants or contracts, resulting in a one-year period at full salary from university sources; the appropriate level of effort must be expended on grant-related activities.~~ They may also obtain additional funds from external sources to cover expenses for travel, research, secretarial assistance, and the purchase of relevant materials. ~~Documentation of all external earnings and expected payments is required and must be reviewed and approved by the department head and provost.~~ Engagement in consulting activities ~~must~~ **shall** be consonant with existing university policy.

(Excerpt from Section 3.9, Research Assignment, concerning eligibility):

~~Full-time~~ tenured faculty members, ~~or faculty members on continued appointment,~~ with the rank of ~~assistant~~ **associate** professor or higher, ~~holding full-time faculty appointments and~~ having accrued a minimum of six years of service, are eligible ~~for to~~ **request** research assignment leaves. ~~Following such a leave, an additional six years of~~ **fulltime** service is necessary before a faculty member may be considered for another research assignment. ~~or study-research leave.~~ ~~Requests may be submitted prior to completion of six years of service, but faculty members must have completed the sixth~~

year before the leave period begins. Faculty members on calendar-year appointments may take research assignment leave for up to six months. Tenure-track faculty members are not eligible to apply for research assignment leave until after tenure has been awarded.

(Excerpt from Section 3.9, Research Assignment, concerning additional compensation):

~~Full salary is provided to recipients of research assignments. Faculty members take on no responsibilities for additional outside income except as provided in compliance with the university's consulting policy.~~

Approval for research assignment provides the faculty member with full salary and related benefits for the period of the leave; faculty members may not take on additional responsibilities for outside income except as allowed by the university's consulting policy. Modest stipends associated with competitive visiting scholar programs at other institutions, competitive national or international fellowships, the Fulbright scholar program, and similar prestigious opportunities to support study and/or scholarly research may be approved where there is clear benefit to the faculty member and the university. Similarly, externally funded reimbursements or allotments for travel, temporary relocation, and other expenses associated with the proposed research assignment may be approved. Documentation of all external earnings and expected payments is required and must be reviewed and approved by the department head and provost. When a faculty member proposes a period of paid employment greater than 50% of the annual salary in a corporate or governmental setting, leave without pay or a contract through Intergovernmental Personnel Act may be more appropriate than a research assignment.

(Excerpts from Section 4.9, Study-Research Leave, concerning eligibility):

~~Tenured faculty members, or f~~ Full-time faculty members holding ~~on~~ continued appointment with significant responsibility for instruction and scholarly productivity, with the rank of assistant professor or higher, ~~holding full-time faculty appointments,~~ and having accrued a minimum of six years of service, are eligible for to request study-research leaves. Following such a leave, an additional six years of full-time service are ~~is~~ necessary before a faculty member may be considered for another ~~research assignment or~~ study-research leave. Faculty on the continued appointment-track are not eligible to request study-research leave until they have been awarded continued appointment. Requests may be submitted prior to completion of six years of service, but faculty members must have completed the sixth year before the leave period begins.

Instead of a proposal for a leave of a full academic or calendar year, faculty members may propose a sequence of semester leave periods at half-salary over several years, not to exceed totally one academic year (for a faculty member on academic year

appointment) or 12 months (for a faculty member on calendar year appointment). If such a sequence of leaves is undertaken, all intervening periods of full-time appointment at Virginia Tech accrue toward the six-year minimum service required before **eligibility consideration of a proposal** for another study-research leave or sequence of leaves.

(Excerpt from Section 4.9, Study-Research Leave, concerning additional compensation):

Recipients of a study-research leave may receive additional compensation from other approved sources up to a total equal to their annual salary from the university. **Faculty members may receive the additional half salary from sponsored grants or contracts, resulting in a one-year period at full salary from university resources; the appropriate level of effort must be expended on grant-related activities.** They may also obtain additional funds from external sources to cover expenses for travel, research, secretarial assistance, and the purchase of relevant materials. **Documentation of all external earnings and expected payments is required and must be reviewed and approved by the department head and the provost.** Engagement in consulting activities **must** ~~shall~~ be consonant with ~~existing~~ university policy.

(Excerpt from Section 4.9, Study-Research Leave, concerning corrections of current text):

Requests for study-research leave to be taken in the following academic year are submitted to the **appropriate department head** ~~dean~~ or director by **November** ~~December~~ 1 for **approval.** ~~consideration by the board of visitors.~~ Requests are forwarded to the board, subject to recommendation of the dean or director and the provost, with the same recognition of the need for effective continuation of the division's program as in the case of educational leaves.

(Excerpt from Section 4.10, Research Assignment, concerning eligibility):

Research assignment is a special category of study-research leave that is awarded to a **faculty member holding continued appointment** ~~tenured academic faculty member~~ for one semester of intensive study or research that increases the quality of the individual's professional stature and future contribution to the university. It may be taken in lieu of an ordinary year-long study-research leave.

~~Tenured faculty members, or~~ **Full-time** faculty members **with the rank of assistant professor or higher holding on** continued appointment, ~~with the rank of assistant professor or higher, holding full time faculty appointments~~ and having accrued a minimum of six years **of** service, are eligible ~~to request~~ **for** research assignment leaves. Following such a leave, an additional six years **of** service **are** ~~is~~ necessary before a faculty member may be considered for another research assignment or study-research

leave. Faculty on the continued-appointment track are not eligible to request research assignment leave until they have been awarded continued appointment. Requests may be submitted prior to completion of six years of service, but faculty members must have completed the sixth year before the leave period begins. Faculty members on calendar year appointments may take research assignment leave for up to six months.

(Excerpt from Section 4.10, Research Assignment, concerning additional compensation):

Approval for research assignment provides the faculty member with full salary and related benefits for the period of the leave; faculty members may not take on additional responsibilities for outside income except as allowed by the university's consulting policy. Modest stipends associated with competitive visiting scholar programs at other institutions, competitive national or international fellowships, the Fulbright Scholar Program, and similar prestigious opportunities to support study and/or scholarly research may be approved where there is clear benefit to the faculty member and the university. Similarly, externally funded reimbursements or allotments for travel, temporary relocation, and other expenses associated with the proposed research assignment may be approved. Documentation of all external earnings and expected payments is required and must be reviewed and approved by the department head and provost. When a faculty member proposes a period of paid employment greater than 50% of the annual salary in a corporate or governmental setting, leave without pay or a contract through Intergovernmental Personnel Act may be more appropriate than a research assignment.

(Excerpt from Section 4.10, Research Assignment, concerning corrections of current text):

The primary privilege of a research assignment is entire relief from teaching, administrative, **and other faculty** duties for one semester. A secondary privilege is that the assignment may be carried out at any location approved by the dean or director, although research programs that require facilities, library resources, or collaborations not available at the university are given special consideration.

An application for research assignment is submitted to the **appropriate department head or chair** by ~~December~~ **November** 1 of the academic year preceding that in which the assignment will be made. Application forms are available from the provost's website.