

Guidelines for Professional Development Leaves

See the complete university policy at policy.byu.edu: “Faculty Leaves Policy.”

Why apply

The university outlines the following purposes that may justify granting a professional development leave (see <https://avp.byu.edu/faculty-leaves>):

1. A significant extension of professional knowledge, experience, or skills beyond those already possessed in research, creative activities, informational competency, or teaching ability
2. A renewal of professional knowledge or skills in the faculty member's field
3. Publication of scholarly or creative work or other exposure to an appropriately critical audience
4. Attaining licensure, certifications, or an advanced degree recognized as the terminal degree in the faculty member's discipline, or one that would bring enhanced competence to the faculty member's assignment
5. Opportunities for collaboration with scholars at other institutions or for consultation or employment at agencies or institutions that would enhance the faculty member's professional skills, stature, or productivity
6. Opportunities for carrying out research or creative work at sites outside the university when this contributes to the quality of the work

The College of Humanities will also consider supporting a PDL request for significant student mentoring projects.

How to apply

Complete a leave request via humfunding.byu.edu. The application requires approval from the department (either the chair or a designated committee), the college (the dean), and the university. The university funds both the faculty member's salary and salary for a visiting full-time faculty replacement for the period of the leave. The college funds approved travel and research expenses. A detailed budget is required in order to be considered for college funding.

When to apply

The university stipulates that professional development leaves are generally intended for full-time faculty members who have been granted CFS. Professional development leaves of a semester or more should not occur more frequently than once every seven years (six years in between leaves), except when the leave is requested for a rare and exceptional opportunity that is justified by the chair (or director) and the dean, and is approved by the academic vice president, with final approval by the university president. When a professional development leave is requested and granted before six years will have passed since the end of the faculty member's prior leave, it is presumed a subsequent leave request would require waiting a commensurately longer period of time. Final approval for professional development leaves submitted during the final CFS review year will not be granted until after a successful outcome of CFS review is known.

After the PDL

The university requires preparation of a post-PDL summary of the experience. In the College of Humanities, this should minimally take the form of a one-page written report submitted to the dean and often an additional report to the department.

Dependent travel during a PDL

When a spouse and/or any eligible dependents under age nineteen accompany faculty members on professional development leaves and seek to travel at university expense, advance authorization must be requested on the professional development leave application when it is submitted for approval by the department chair and the dean. If the college or department chooses to fund any travel or reasonable living expenses for the spouse and eligible dependents accompanying the faculty member on the professional development leave, the faculty member should contact a qualified tax consultant to determine the tax liability associated with any funding.

The College of Humanities will consider covering travel expenses for dependents when the faculty member's trip is central to achieving the PDL's outcomes and is over 30 days long. When approved, these funds typically cover dependent travel costs but not additional per diem, though accommodations may be made based on individual circumstances.