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| <b>Policy Title</b>   | <b>Faculty Research and Training Leaves Policy</b>                    |
| <b>Responsible AIU Office<br/>(Higher Management/Directorate)</b> | Office of the VP for Research Affairs<br>Research Executive Committee |
| <b>Policy Owner<br/>(Executive Department/Office)</b>             | Office of Research Services<br>Chief Financial Manager (CFO)          |
| <b>Pertinent Dates</b>  | Draft1: 27 <sup>th</sup> June 2022.                                   |

## I. SCOPE OF POLICY

[Provides a comprehensive description of the policy, the need for it, different parties interested, the problem or conflict the policy addresses, legal or regulatory reasons for the policy, and an outline for the procedures required and operational activities affected.]

**The Faculty Research Leave Policy is designed to provide faculty members with additional time to focus on their scholarly interests, free from the usual responsibilities of teaching and service. It allows faculty members time to pursue their scholarship with greater intensity, to bring projects to fruition, and to embark upon new lines of inquiry. It is meant to provide greater predictability and more equal access, not limited by the availability and requirements of external funding, while still recognizing and rewarding initiative.**

AIU proposes three types of research leave, grouped into two categories, building on the existing structure.

- Non-competitive research leave
  1. Sabbatical:
    - One semester at full pay, or two semesters at half pay
  2. Junior Faculty Research Fellowships, JFRFs
    - One semester at full pay
- Competitive research leave
  1. External Fellowship Leave, EFL
    - EFLs are granted for one or two semesters, at full pay
    - The number of faculty who can be awarded EFLs in a given year is not explicitly limited by the Dean's Office, but is subject to the teaching and other needs of departments.
    - Faculty are free to apply (according to selection criteria below) at any point in the academic cycle

## II. DEFINITIONS

[Provides a list of definitions for terms that may be unfamiliar or used in a specialized context in the policy.]

**Sabbatical leaves** are usually devoted exclusively to carrying out a research project but may also consist of a course of study designed to learn new research skills essential for future projects. Any teaching or other paid professional activity during the period of the sabbatical leave must be approved by the Dean in advance of the activity. Approval will be based on whether the activity complements the approved sabbatical project.

**The External Fellowship Leave (EFL) Program** provides one or two semesters of leave for tenure line faculty who have been awarded a funded external research fellowship.

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### III. POLICY STATEMENT

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[This section clearly and concisely states AIU's position (goals, plans, or intentions) on the subject matter addressed by the policy, lists the various parties that are required to follow the policy and the situations where the policy applies. This section also includes a clear description of how the policy will be enforced together with any conditions or restrictions.]

AIU aims to:

- To support and prioritize faculty research enthusiastically.
- To create an environment in which faculty know research is expected, facilitated, valued, and rewarded.
- To provide clarity to faculty and administrators regarding research leave options, eligibility, and process.

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### IV. RESPONSIBILITIES

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[This section includes a list of the roles or units who are responsible for policy implementation and related processes (e.g. faculty, students, operating units, departments, managers, etc.). A summary of the major responsibilities/key actions of each is required together with the framework of interactions/hierarchy among them. Details can be provided separately in the procedures section.]

Proposals will be considered by the Standing Committee, which will submit its recommendations to the Research Executive Committee for approval.

Proposals for new EFs must be received by the Vice Dean for Research two weeks in advance of the scheduled review dates, and should provide clear and detailed evidence of the competitive nature of the selection process.

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### V. POLICY STANDARDS AND PROCEDURES

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[The section contains the full text of the policy, including detailed information about the policy components and procedures.]

The university's policy regarding eligibility for and timing of research leave is below:

#### A. Types of research leave

##### 1. Sabbatical:

*Eligibility requirements:*

- Tenured faculty are eligible for a sabbatical leave based on accumulated semesters of counted service. Leaves of absence do not count towards sabbatical eligibility. Since the award of a sabbatical is an investment which is meant to profit the institution as well as the individual, faculty are committed by the acceptance of a sabbatical award to return to AIU after a sabbatical to teach for at least one academic year. A report on research progress is expected upon completion of any period of sabbatical.
- Semesters of eligibility towards sabbatical are accumulated at the rate of 1.25 weeks per semester. Semesters of eligibility are banked automatically up to a maximum of 24 semesters. No exceptions are granted to the 24 semesters maximum.
- Upon the accumulation of 12 semesters of credit toward sabbatical, faculty are eligible for:
  - (1) a full academic year of sabbatical leave at half pay, or
  - (2) one semester of sabbatical leave at full pay. Delaying one sabbatical need not delay eligibility for future sabbaticals for faculty on the Main Campus.
- Faculty also may apply for a period of partial sabbatical. A partial sabbatical does not count as a semester of service toward a regular sabbatical leave at full pay. It will use up credits of accumulated eligibility for a regular sabbatical. A partial sabbatical may reduce the teaching responsibilities to provide more time for research activities, and may be combined with periods of reduction in pay.
- Generally sabbatical leaves will be granted when the University will not suffer undue academic inconvenience and when the applicant uses the leave for research or for formal study. It is evident that the number of leaves granted in any academic year must be limited. Some sabbatical requests may not be approved. Please see the Guidelines for Approval of Sabbatical Applications for Tenured Faculty for more information.

## 2. Junior Faculty Research Fellowships (JFRF):

### *Eligibility and information:*

- The Junior Faculty Research Fellowship is automatically granted to all Main Campus tenure-line assistant professors. This Fellowship provides one semester leave at full pay for full-time work on research with no responsibilities for teaching or service. The purpose is to enable the completion of work that will contribute to the evaluation of the application for tenure and promotion. The Fellowship typically is taken in the third or fourth year on the tenure track.
- The Fellowship period counts as a semester of service toward both the tenure probationary period and sabbatical eligibility.

## 3. External Fellowship Leave (EFL):

- Subject to being in compliance with the **3-in-4 rule** (See B. below). EFL will be granted to tenure line faculty who are awarded a qualifying external fellowship for one or two semesters depending on the length of the external fellowship, free of all teaching and service obligations, to tenure line faculty at any rank – Assistant, Associate, or Full Professor
- Any shortfall in regular salary during the period of the fellowship will be made up by the university
- Award of a period of EFL requires the approval of the faculty member's department chair and dean.

### *Eligibility*

- All tenure line faculty of the Main Campus are eligible to apply.

- An EFL is a period of research leave, and as such is subject to a maximum of three semesters of research leave can be taken in any four-year period.

### **B. Limits on the frequency of research leave**

Senior Faculty are eligible to take one semester of sabbatical (or two at half pay) after six years of counted service.

In addition, all faculty are subject to the following “**3-in-4 rule**”:

- A maximum of three semesters of any combination of the categories of research leave above – sabbatical, JFRF, and EFL– can be taken in any four-year period.
- Note that so-called Chair’s Leave (typically granted after a faculty member has completed a term in an administrative role), and other contractually agreed leaves, are not included in this 3-in-4 rule.

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## **VI. FORMS/INSTRUCTIONS (if applicable)**

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[This section lists the forms that are required to comply with the policy and provides the purpose of each form with any conditions, restrictions, and/or exceptions for their use. A hyperlink to the applicable form(s) should be provided if available.]

### **1- Selection process**

All research leaves are subject to the eligibility criteria above.

- Sabbatical: granted, subject to normal approval processes
- JFRFs: granted, subject to normal approval processes
- EFL: automatic, subject to the following conditions:
  - The external fellowship must be on the list of qualified fellowships (as defined below).
  - Approval of the department chair and dean, reflecting teaching and service needs
  - Formal application for an EFL should be submitted with support of the department chair and dean, along with evidence of award of the EF.
  - Applications are accepted on a rolling basis throughout the year
  - Fellowship funds for faculty salaries or stipends accrue to the University (see financial issues below)
  - Non-salary allowances paid by the fellowship to cover travel, accommodation in residence, etc. do not accrue to the University

#### **a. Approved external fellowship list**

A list of EFL-qualified fellowships will be curated and published in an open and transparent fashion by the Research Executive Committee, convened by the Vice president for Research Affairs. Faculty members who wish to apply for one of the listed fellowships should inform their chair and dean and seek their approval to take EFL should their external application be successful.

The rationale for using such a list is that the University is willing to “contract out” the selection of high priority research leave to bona fide external evaluators. In practice, this means that to be included on the list, an external fellowship must be highly competitive and open to a broad range of scholars, and selection should be through a transparent and selective peer-review process. Often, “prestigious” fellowships satisfy these criteria, but prestige is neither a necessary nor sufficient condition for being included on the list.

There is no minimum (nor maximum) monetary value associated with inclusion on the list of qualifying EFs, although funding levels will be considered in determining qualification for inclusion on the list.

Proposals will be considered on three pre-announced dates in October, January, and April each year by the Standing Committee, which will submit its recommendations to the Research Executive Committee for approval. Proposals for new EFs must be received by the Vice Dean for Research two weeks in advance of the scheduled review dates, and should provide clear and detailed evidence of the competitive nature of the selection process, as outlined below. When meeting the deadline is infeasible (e.g., when a faculty member is unexpectedly offered a fellowship for which s/he had not explicitly applied), new EFs will be considered for inclusion on the list on an ad hoc basis at times outside of the three scheduled review dates. Proposals for new fellowships to be included on the list of approved EFs can be submitted by individual faculty, and should include:

- The name of the fellowship and the sponsoring organization, with website
- Whether the fellowship accepts applications or is simply offered to selected individuals
- The number of applications typically received by the sponsoring organization and the number of fellowships typically awarded, if available
- The eligibility and selection conditions
- A list of scholars who have held the award previously.

**2- VI. Financial issues**

- Faculty are guaranteed full continuation of salary and benefits during periods of research leave, except in the case when they elect to take a one-year sabbatical on half pay.
- In the case of EFLs:
  - If the fellowship comes with a salary or stipend that is less than the faculty member's annual AIU salary, those funds accrue fully to the Office of the Dean.
  - If the fellowship comes with a salary or stipend in excess of the faculty member's annual AIU salary, such excess can be used towards otherwise unfunded summer salary.
- If the hiring of adjunct faculty is necessary to cover courses due to faculty absence, reasonable costs of doing so will be covered by the Dean's Office.

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**VII. APPENDICES (if applicable)**

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[This section includes any additional relevant information or documents in attached appendices.]

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**VIII. RELATED POLICIES**

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[This section lists policy titles and numbers that are related to the implementation and/or enforcement of this policy.]

- Post-doctoral Fellows Policy
- Research Fund Management and Financial Practices

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**VIV. CONTACT INFORMATION**

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[Lists relevant position titles and/or offices who may be contacted by University community members for any questions about the policy.]

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