

# Study Research Leave

**Responsible Office:**  
VCU Human Resource Division

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## POLICY STATEMENT AND PURPOSE

Virginia Commonwealth University encourages professional growth and development by enabling faculty members to apply for study-research leave. The awarding of study-research leave is based on merit and is subject to the availability of funds and the ability of the department or school to meet its teaching and other requirements.

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## WHO SHOULD READ THIS POLICY

Tenured teaching and research faculty should read this policy.

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## RELATED DOCUMENTS

VCU Study-Research Leave Agreement and Promissory Note

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## CONTACTS

VCU Human Resources officially interprets this policy and shall revise or eliminate any or all parts as necessary to meet the changing needs of Virginia Commonwealth University. Please direct policy questions to VCU Human Resources.

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## PROCEDURES

### **Terms of Leave**

Faculty members meeting the criteria below are eligible to apply for either one-half contract year of leave at their regular full-time salary or one contract year of leave at one-half their regular full-time salary. In the latter

circumstance, departments and faculty members may agree to support the remainder of the salary (up to but not exceeding full pay) from non-state or external sources. Faculty are encouraged to seek external funds to support study-research leave at either half- or full-pay.

### **Eligibility**

Eligible faculty must be tenured with six years of prior University service and have completed six years of service since a previous study-research leave.

### **Return Commitments**

There must be a written commitment to return to the University and serve a period of employment equal to twice the period of the leave. If the return-to-work commitment is not honored, the individual must reimburse to the University the salary received during the leave period, plus interest, regardless of the source of funds (E&G, grant, external, etc.). The faculty member and the dean must complete a Study-Research Leave Agreement and Promissory Note (see attached form) at least thirty days prior to the scheduled leave. The leave is not authorized until all signatures have been obtained on the promissory note.

The dean of the college or school will determine the nature and scope of a written report or grant proposal to be submitted by the faculty member within three months of return from leave.

### **Application Procedure**

Each college and school may adopt criteria for assessing applications and determining priorities to assure orderly sequencing of personnel on leave. All other relevant procedures are subject to the appropriate vice president's approval.

The faculty member must submit to the dean of his/her school or college, through the department chair, a written request for a proposed study-research leave six to 12 months in advance of the leave period. The written request will describe the proposed leave activity and how it will benefit the faculty member, department, school, and University.

The merits of the proposed study-research will be judged and other determining priorities reviewed prior to preliminary approval by the dean of the school or college. The appropriate vice president or designee makes final approval.

### **Benefits**

Faculty members on study-research leave are considered to be full-time employees while on leave. They continue to be enrolled in the retirement system, with retirement and group life insurance based on their regular full-time salary. Taxes (social security, federal, and state taxes) are based on the actual leave salary, including any external funds that must be routed through the University in order to ensure coordination of federal and state income reporting. Health care coverage and other deductions (i.e., flexible reimbursement accounts, parking) will continue in the same manner as prior to the leave.

Faculty members will not accrue annual, sick, or holiday leave while on study-research leave. All leave balances will be retained until return from leave, subject to regular leave policies and procedures. Unused holiday leave continues to expire 12 months after accrual.