

Sabbatical Preparation

Faculty Development Committee Recommendations

According to the Augsburg University Faculty Handbook:

6.11.6 Application and Approval Process

Eligible faculty members must submit a brief letter to the Department Chair and/or Program Director and the Dean indicating their intention to take a sabbatical leave. This letter must be submitted by the date specified in Section 6.2.3 Timelines for Reviews in the year prior to the anticipated leave. The letter should specify the dates of the leave; area(s) of research, study, or professional development; and expected benefits to the College and the individual faculty member. The letter does not need to include a detailed research proposal or bibliography.

The Augsburg University handbook does not require a detailed proposal and this document does not change the process or expectations necessary for faculty members to secure a sabbatical. While this document does not change the handbook language, the Faculty Development Committee (FDC) sees sabbatical applications as an opportunity to provide the Office of Academic Affairs evidence of the importance of sabbaticals. In addition, a well-crafted and detailed proposal provides the Board of Regents, Provost, Academic Deans, and Department Chairs with a better understanding of how your sabbatical will benefit the University as well as your professional development.

The FDC understands that one of the main components of a sabbatical is to provide faculty with a chance to rest and rejuvenate. You have earned the opportunity to slow your daily pace and reflect upon your work. As such, we are not encouraging the development of an overly rigid four-month outline of tasks. While sabbaticals do afford well-deserved time away from our daily duties, they also provide the opportunity to focus on a specific project not possible through normal workload assignments. Our goal is that you consider the following suggestions in order to create a sabbatical proposal that will effectively promote your project. Because sabbatical projects can take many forms (e.g. creative ventures, community collaborations, service to the university, teaching development, professionally beneficial travel, independent research, collaborative scholarship, etc.), strong proposals will clearly articulate the importance of your work.

While specific details can help make your case, consider keeping your proposal relatively brief (two pages max) given the general nature of the handbook language. In creating your proposal, we offer the following suggestions to consider, but they are not to be seen as a required checklist.

- Write for a general audience by avoiding, when possible, discipline-specific language.
- Clearly articulate the purpose of your project. For example, will you:
 - Engage in scholarly or creative activity?
 - Develop instructional material?
 - Gain competence in a new area of expertise?
 - Conduct university-related research or service?

- It is helpful if the goals and objectives of your sabbatical are well defined, tied to your department's statement of scholarship, and proportionate to the length of leave. Consider addressing the following questions when demonstrating the significance of your work.
 - How does your project relate to other work in the field?
 - How will your project benefit Augsburg students?
 - How will the broader community be impacted by your work?
 - How will your future work be informed by your sabbatical?
 - How will you expand your areas of expertise?
- Including a projected timeline for your project can demonstrate the complexity and importance of faculty sabbaticals.
 - Your work may not be encapsulated within the boundaries of a four-month sabbatical, so do not feel pressure to list the last day of your sabbatical as the completion date.
 - Clearly state if you are beginning a new venture or continuing work on an already established project.
 - If possible, outline specific goals and the methods for measuring the outcomes in our timeline.
- Describe any funds or equipment, whether grant funded or out-of-pocket expenses, needed for the project.
- If your work includes collaboration with other scholars, artists, or community members, it would be advisable to discuss their role in your project.
- If possible, address your plan for disseminating the results of your work to your department, students, campus, community, and/or professional organization upon completion of the sabbatical.