LUTHER COLLEGE

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Department: Human Resources
Subject: Leave Policy for Exempt Staff
Date Issued: June 1, 2009
Date Revised:
Approved By:

I. Policy/Procedure

This policy outlines the guidelines for exempt staff sabbatical or study leaves. Leaves are not guaranteed. The needs of the College, the availability of temporary replacements, the identification of resources to support the leave, and the impact on College operations will be considered in the decision-making process.

II. Purpose

The purpose of a leave is to provide an opportunity for study, research, and creative activities that foster professional growth and revitalization, thereby enhancing Luther College. Sabbaticals or study leaves need to be directly related to the staff member's job responsibilities.

III. Scope

This policy applies to all exempt employees.

IV. Terms and Definitions

Leaves: In order to provide flexibility for the staff members as well as for replacement planning, a leave can be proposed for:
- One semester (with or without January Term)
- Full year
- 2-3 months during a summer
- January term only

V. Procedures and Guidelines

A. Eligibility
- Exempt staff are eligible for leave after six years of service and every six years thereafter.
- Leave may be with or without compensation for up to 12 months, not necessarily 12 consecutive months.
- Leave time does not accrue if not taken.

B. Leave Application – *see attached form*
- A narrative proposal
- A letter of recommendation from the applicant's supervisor

- A leave plan developed by the applicant and supervisor that details anticipated costs of the leave, including replacement/coverage costs.

C. Approval Process
- Timeline
  - Normally a leave application should be submitted to one's supervisor one year prior to the proposed start date of the leave.
  - The supervisor should prepare a letter of recommendation.
  - The supervisor should then submit the application, the letter of recommendation and the leave plan to the appropriate vice president.
  - If the vice president approves the application, he/she will forward the documents to the Cabinet, who has final approval.

- Approval
  - The granting of a leave is discretionary. Approval will depend on the availability of resources and the viability of options for a cost-effective replacement plan.
  - Criteria to review and prioritize proposals will include:
    - Advantages that the leave's outcomes will have for the individual's assigned responsibilities and for Luther College;
    - Professional development opportunities for the applicant;
    - The opportunity to seek an advanced degree;
    - Years of service since an applicant's previous leave at the College;
    - Development of skills for an expanded or changed position;
    - Ability and expertise of the applicant to achieve the outcomes anticipated by the proposal;
    - Capacity of the College to cover the applicant's responsibilities during his or her leave.

- Prior to Leave
  - It is understood that a College-supported leave is an investment in the future and implies continuous service to Luther. The recipient will be required to sign an agreement stipulating that the recipient will return to active employment for two years at Luther College following his/her leave. If the recipient does not return, he or she must repay the College the amount of salary, health care and retirement benefits received during the leave period. If he or she returns for only one year, he or she must repay one-half of the salary, but will not be required to repay the cost of benefits. If the recipient requests a leave less than a semester, the return to active employment may be less than the two-year stipulation subject to Vice President approval.

D. Assessment of Leave
- Leave recipients must provide the Cabinet with a report that includes the activities and outcomes achieved during the leave within 60 days after their return. The report must indicate how the leave benefited Luther College and advanced the individual's professional development.

VI. Confidentiality and Record

All applications and documents related to sabbatical leaves will be held in strict confidence in the Office of Human Resources.

Exempt Staff Leave Application

Due to supervisor one year prior to start of requested leave

I.   <u>Information</u>
    1. Name: _____

    2. Position: _____

    3. Title of Sabbatical or Leave Project: _____

    4. Time requested: ___ fall semester   ___ January term ___ spring semester
       ___ academic year   ___ summer

II.   <u>Attachments</u>
    1. Summary. Describe your project in three or four sentences, assuming your readers are colleagues in other departments who may not understand the nature of your position at Luther.

    2. Project Proposal. Provide a detailed description of your leave project, using the guidelines on the second page of this application as an outline.

    3. Supplemental documentation from other organizations if necessary (see second page of this application).

    4. A current résumé, which should include the following:
        a. Educational history
        b. Professional history
        c. Previous leaves (including dates and sources of support)
        d. Publications and professional activity

_____   _____
    Signature and Date   Supervisor Signature and Date

_____
    Vice President's Signature and Date

Guidelines for Writing an Exempt Leave Proposal

1. Project Proposal

   a. Describe your project.
   b. Outline how the leave will make you more effective in your position and how it fits into your long-term plan for professional growth.
   c. Describe how Luther College will benefit from your leave.
   d. Relate this proposal to your past work experience, including any previous leaves.
   e. Demonstrate that the plan is realistic and manageable in the timeframe you propose (one semester or one year).

2. If the project includes off campus research or a residency, provide documentation showing that all arrangements have been made.

3. If the leave is dependent on working with an organization, the application must include a letter from a representative of that organization indicating his or her agreement with the project arrangements.

4. Discuss the nature of any supplemental funds you are seeking to help complete the leave project.