



Sabbatical Information Session

Understanding purpose, eligibility, proposals, and process

University of Northern Colorado • September 2026

Today's conversation

Why sabbaticals exist

10 min

Purpose + appropriate use

Who is eligible

10 min

Timing + service rules

What a proposal must address

15 min

Work, benefit, compensation, coverage

How decisions are made

15 min

Faculty → unit leader → dean → provost

Questions

10 min

Clarifications + next steps

Start with the dual purpose

1 Faculty growth & renewal

The leave should advance the professional growth and renewal of the tenured faculty member.

2 University benefit

The leave must also produce a manifest, demonstrable benefit to the University.

A useful test: Can a reviewer clearly see both purposes in the proposal?

Sabbaticals are competitive in nature; proposal quality matters.

Appropriate use: connect the project to impact

Professional growth

How will this work develop you as a faculty member?

Disciplinary knowledge

How will it contribute to knowledge in your discipline?

Student experience

How could it influence students' educational experience?

University reputation

How could it enhance UNC's reputation?

Proposal implication: address all four explicitly rather than leaving reviewers to infer the connection.

Eligibility: the core rules



1. Must be tenured by the time the sabbatical begins.
2. At least 6 years of full-time faculty service since initial hire or the previous sabbatical.
 - Leave without pay generally does not count, except with appeal.
 - FMLA leave does count.
 - Administrative service does not count on the faculty clock; mixed appointments accrue according to the faculty-work percentage.
3. Faculty applying for tenure in the sixth year may also apply; an award is contingent on successful tenure.

What the application needs to make visible

Project & benefit

Work to be completed

Benefits to UNC / appropriate use

Any additional compensation

Planning & context

Whether the proposal is time-sensitive

Any previous postponement

Length of time since last sabbatical

Service commitments needing coverage/proxies

Compensation and workload

One semester

100% pay
15 workload units

One academic year

60% pay
30 workload units

Workload

Sabbatical is the entirety of workload; normally 1.0 Professional Activity.

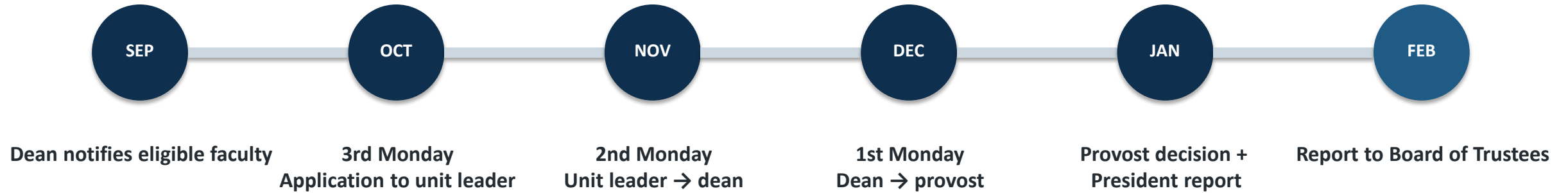
No overload while on sabbatical.

Other compensation (e.g., grants/contracts) is permitted only when related to the sabbatical purpose and disclosed in the proposal or appendix.

Standard University policies on consulting and outside activities still apply.

Regular academic year only (Fall/Spring), except for 12-month library faculty.

The annual process at a glance



Applications are submitted in Faculty Success. Current-year deadlines and policy links are posted by the Provost Office.

Different levels have different review responsibilities

Faculty

Standards of the discipline
+
resource / staffing issues

Uses department/school protocols approved by the dean.

Unit leader

Standards of the discipline
+
resource / staffing issues

May disagree with the faculty recommendation.

Dean

Resource / staffing issues
+
whether the proposal fulfills appropriate uses

May disagree with faculty and/or unit leader.

Provost

Receives the full recommendation workflow.

Provost decision is final.

Recommendations, responses, and non-approval



Applicant is informed of the recommendation at each level and may respond once at each level.

- The response is reported to the level below and forwarded to the level above.

If faculty do not approve a proposal for reasons of academic merit, the sabbatical is denied.

- The proposal still moves through the remaining steps for reporting purposes unless the faculty member withdraws.

Unit leader and dean recommendations may differ from earlier recommendations within their defined review responsibilities.

If an approved sabbatical must be postponed

Faculty-requested postponement

A faculty member may request a one-year postponement. Unit leader and dean approval are required. If the leave is not taken within that year, the faculty member must reapply.

Dean-delayed sabbatical

A dean may delay an approved sabbatical for a maximum of up to one year.

Important: postponement does not change eligibility for the next sabbatical; eligibility is calculated as if the postponement had not occurred.

If the University cannot fund all approved sabbaticals

1

Time-sensitive

ahead of non-time-sensitive proposals

2

Previously postponed

ahead of brand-new proposals

3

Time since last sabbatical

faculty member's length of time since previous sabbatical

After approval: obligations continue

Complete the approved plan

Fulfill the goals and plan in the submitted proposal. A revision may be submitted, but it requires unit leader and dean approval.

Submit the report

An acceptable report is due within one year after completion. Unit leader and dean determine acceptability. Late or unacceptable reports make the faculty member ineligible for a subsequent sabbatical.

Return to regular workload

Return to standard University workload for at least the full-time equivalent of one academic year after the sabbatical.

Sabbatical reports are subject to open-records requests / inspection by the State.

Before you submit: a five-question check

- Is the work to be completed specific and understandable?
- Have I shown both my professional growth and a demonstrable benefit to UNC?
- Have I addressed all four appropriate-use effects?
- Have I disclosed compensation, time sensitivity, prior postponement, and service coverage as applicable?
- Could reviewers at each level find the information they need without having to infer it?

Questions & Discussion

As you think about your proposal:

What part of the process or policy would be most helpful to clarify before you begin?