



Office of the Provost

**Board of Trustees – Information Item
Sabbatical Leave Approvals for 2026-27**

TO: President Andy Feinstein
UNC Board of Trustees

FROM: Kirsten Fleming, Provost & Executive Vice President

RE: Sabbatical Leave Approvals for 2026-27

DATE: February 06, 2026

In accordance with the University of Northern Colorado Board of Trustees Policy Manual 2-3-1001, twenty-seven members of the faculty have been approved for a sabbatical leave during the 2026-27 academic year. Summaries of sabbaticals approved for 2026-27 are attached. Here are the numbers by term of leave (semester or full academic year):

Fall 2026: 10
Spring 2027: 14
Academic Year 26/27: 3

Details on process:

We began this year's sabbatical cycle with five previously approved proposals from faculty members whose sabbatical leave was delayed due to resource constraints, service in an administrative role, or personal reasons. Of those five:

- One was approved but delayed until AY 2026-2027 due to resource constraints (Gilderhus).
- Three were included on the list of funded proposals for AY 2025-2026 and were subsequently delayed by the faculty member (Johnson, Morrison, and White).
- One was delayed due to the faculty member serving in an interim administrative role (Sileo).

Upon confirmation in Spring 2026, one of the above five withdrew their approved sabbatical leave (Morrison). Thus, four of the five previously approved proposals are planned to go forward for AY 2026-2027, unless other circumstances arise which result in delay or withdrawal.

In Fall 2025, we received twenty-four new applications from eligible faculty members for leaves to be taken in AY 2026-27. One proposal was denied because it did not meet the requirements of appropriate use of sabbatical leave [2-3-1001(3)]. Of the twenty-three new applications approved, none have been delayed until AY 2027-28.



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Here is a summary of active proposals and results by college:

College	Prior Active Proposals Confirmed for AY 26/27	New (Fall 25) Proposals	Total New Proposals Approved	Total New Proposals Delayed	Total Funded for AY 26/27
Education & Behavioral Sciences	1	4	4	0	5
Humanities & Social Sciences	1	7	7	0	8
Monfort College of Business	0	1	1	0	1
Natural & Health Sciences	0	7	7	0	7
Performing & Visual Arts	2	4	3	0	5
University Libraries	0	1	1	0	1
Totals	4	24	23	0	27

The following sabbatical titles and summaries of approved proposals were provided by faculty members during the application process.



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**Funded Sabbatical Leaves
Academic Year 2026-27**

New Applications Approved for AY 2026-27

College of Education & Behavioral Sciences

Sandy Bowen (Spring)

School of Special Education

Title: Innovative Research to Practice

Summary: During my sabbatical I will enhance my professional growth, the University's reputation, and my knowledge of the preparation of Deaf and hard of hearing special educators through an examination of 1) provisional teacher preparation experiences; 2) family-professional partnerships during the IEP process; and 3) an innovative DHH-specific ABA service models.

Michael Cohen (Spring)

Department of Leadership, Policy, & Development

Title: New Textbook in Education Policy

Summary: I will write and submit a proposal for a new textbook in education policy. The book will aim to prepare aspiring educational leaders—including UNC students—and scholars to work within and study today's increasingly turbulent policy arena. A widely-used textbook authored by a UNC professor and distributed by a major textbook publisher will bring positive attention to UNC's education programs.

Tracy Gershwin (Spring)

School of Special Education

Title: Bridging Families, Behavior, and Preparation: Three Interdisciplinary Projects

Summary: This sabbatical advances three interconnected projects: (1) strengthening family-school partnerships, (2) expanding innovative DHH-ABA research to support students with challenging behavior, and (3) enhancing UNC's teacher preparation in behavior analysis to elevate the University's impact and reputation.

Suzette Youngs (Spring)

School of Teacher Education

Title: Advancing Children's Literature and Teacher Recruitment

Summary: This sabbatical will allow me to advance my research and focus on my passions: children's literature, equity in representation in children's texts, and strategies to strengthen recruitment and retention of future teachers, emphasizing UNC's Future Teacher Conference and Club in cultivating passionate, effective educators.

College of Humanities & Social Sciences

Jonathan Alcantar (Spring)

Department of Chicana/o & Latinx Studies

Title: Instituciones para la Gente: HSI Futurism and the Struggle for Presence

Summary: This sabbatical examines early colleges created by Chicano and Latino communities to make higher education more inclusive and socially just. By studying their vision and challenges, the project will inspire new ways for our universities to serve diverse students.

Brook Blair (Spring)

Department of Political Science & International Affairs

Title: The Noetic and Socio-psychological Analysis of the Age of Regression: Revisiting the Factions of the Soul in the Writings of Robert Musil and Sigmund Freud

Summary: I propose to write Chapter 1 and the Conclusion of the aforementioned book project during sabbatical leave; the Introduction and chapters 1–2 (15,000–18,000 words per chapter) will be completed prior to my proposed leave.

Sarah Cornish (Spring)

Department of English

Title: Interventions in the Field of Modernist Studies

Summary: I will prepare two articles for publication and perform archives research to make interventions in my field of Modernist Studies, which directly informs my undergraduate and graduate instruction. UNC's students benefit from my work as they are exposed to cutting edge approaches to Modernist, Periodical, and Film Studies, and UNC's R2 reputation is enhanced by high-quality scholarly activity.

Andrew Creekmore (Spring)

Department of Anthropology

Title: Blended authenticity at the Medina cemetery in Loveland, Colorado

Summary: I will examine the role of authenticity in the reconstruction of the historic Medina cemetery through data I collected since 2011 and data collected during my sabbatical. The resulting manuscript will advance my discipline's study of how communities memorialize heritage and enhance UNC's reputation for engaging our community.

Whitney Duncan (Fall)

Department of Anthropology

Title: Convivencia: Im/migrant Storytelling as Accompaniment, Belonging, and Care

Summary: My sabbatical will be dedicated to a public scholarship project co-created with Latina im/migrants to produce a juried book, website, and storytelling events. This work will advance decolonial methods in my discipline, provide rich materials for students, and enhance the university's reputation as a community-engaged HSI.

Chris Talbot (Fall)

Gender Studies Program

Title: Gender and Sexual Politics among the Mormons in the Late Twentieth Century

Summary: This project continues my research into gender and sexuality among Mormons in the 1980s and 1990s. I will examine queer Mormon activism, analyze a central figure in Mormon anti-ERA activism in the 1980s and extend my work on Mormon feminist Sonia Johnson's later career.

Victoria Terranova (Spring)

Department of Criminology & Criminal Justice

Title: Bias in the Criminal Justice System

Summary: The objective of the leave will be to publish a textbook about bias in the criminal justice system. This will be the first of its kind in presenting a comprehensive, empirical discussion defining and identifying origins of bias, and the application of bias across facets of the system: policing, courts, and corrections.

Monfort College of Business

Isaac Wanasika (Fall)

Department of Management

Title: Three Interconnected Projects

Summary: I plan to complete three interconnected projects that include a research project on workforce development strategies for a sustainable human-AI collaboration, completion of the final phase of the NSF EPIIC Project on entrepreneurship ecosystem capacity building, and an NSF S-STEM project that has a goal of orchestrating internships for UNC STEM students.

College of Natural & Health Sciences

Brian Dauenhauer (Fall)

Department of Kinesiology, Nutrition, & Dietetics

Title: A Decade of PA Leadership Training at UNC: Lessons from the Past and Innovations for the Future

Summary: This project examines the first decade of UNC's MAT-PEPAL program to assess its impact, identify innovations, and strengthen future directions. Findings will inform curriculum improvement, advance the field of physical activity (PA) leadership, and elevate UNC's reputation for educational excellence.

Nathaniel Eldredge (Academic Year)

Department of Mathematical Sciences

Title: Research in Probability and Geometry

Summary: I propose a year-long sabbatical focusing on pure mathematics research, on topics in probability theory and differential geometry. The work will build my skills and publication record, solve important mathematical problems, develop opportunities for undergraduate research, and showcase UNC as a place for research.

Donald Finan (Fall)

Department of Communication Sciences & Disorders

Title: Artificial Intelligence as Disruptor in Communication Sciences and Disorders

Summary: Speech-Language Pathology & Audiology face substantial changes to professional practice in coming years due to the rise of artificial intelligence systems. While it is evident that these disciplines will be affected, it is likely that artificial intelligence will act as a disruptor for which training will need to adapt.

Jennifer Krause (Spring)

Department of Kinesiology, Nutrition, & Dietetics

Title: Defining Digital Excellence: Developing a Technology Competency Framework for PETE Faculty

Summary: The purpose of this leave is to design and validate a technology competency framework for Physical Education Teacher Education faculty, advancing digital expertise, enriching teacher candidate learning, and strengthening UNC's reputation in technology integration innovation within teacher education.

Carlo Parker (Spring)

School of Nursing

Title: Impact of Nursing Curriculum and Licensure Changes on Nurse Decision-Making Models

Summary: The nursing education curriculum and licensure exam were changed in 2021 and 2023 to improve clinical judgement and decision-making. The purpose is to measure how nurses make decisions now to see if the changes in curriculum and licensure are having the desired impact, an increase in analytic decision-making.

Jennifer Parrish (Fall)

Department of Biological Sciences

Title: Building a Sustainable Campus Apiary: Advancing Bee Biology Research and Experiential Learning at UNC

Summary: During the sabbatical, I will deepen my expertise in honeybee biology and outdoor experiential learning to strengthen UNC's campus apiary. These efforts will expand interdisciplinary research and learning opportunities for students and advance UNC's reputation for excellence in Science Education.

Yoon Tae Sung (Spring)

Department of Kinesiology, Nutrition, & Dietetics

Title: Sport Investments and their impacts on potential host communities

Summary: This sabbatical explores how major sport events influence diverse aspects of host communities. Through information collection and fieldwork in South Korea during its 2036 Olympic bid process, the purpose of this sabbatical is to observe potential social impacts of hosting large-scale sport events.

College of Performing & Visual Arts

Monte Black (Fall)

School of Theatre Arts & Dance

Title: Jazz Dance Pedagogy

Summary: To study the current pedagogical techniques of Jazz and Modern Dance at the professional level. To attend classes in New York City and Los Angeles that are frequented by professional dancers and taught by industry professionals to enhance my growth as a teaching scholar and bring updated practices into my studio classes and culminating in a new dance piece set on my students.

Wesley Broadnax (Spring)

School of Music

Title: Chinook Behind the Wind: A Ballet for Wind Ensemble & Dancers

Summary: This project is designed to create a ballet specifically for wind ensemble and dancers with composer Mauricio Charbonnier, and choreographer Ignacio González Cano, both of Argentina. This work will be groundbreaking in that to date, there is not a ballet that utilizes the wind ensemble as the accompanying force.

Steven Kovalcheck (Fall)

School of Music

Title: Advancing Jazz Improvisation Through Contemporary Harmonic Study

Summary: This project studies post-1995 pianists' harmonic innovations to update methods for improvisation study. Through transcription, analysis, and curriculum design, it will produce teaching materials that strengthen graduate jazz study and advance UNC's leadership in jazz education.

University Libraries

Jay Trask (Fall)

Archives & Special Collections

Title: Historic Survey of Water-related Structures Along the Cache la Poudre River.

Summary: The project focuses on updating a manuscript for publication documenting the history of water-related structures along the Cache la Poudre River corridor. An open educational resource would also be created to allow students, educators, and the public the opportunity to explore this aspect of Colorado's water history.

Previously Approved Applications Delayed until AY 2026-27

College of Education & Behavioral Sciences

Nancy Sileo (Academic Year)

School of Special Education

Title: ECSE Best Practices

Summary: During my sabbatical I will enhance my professional growth, the University's reputation, and my knowledge of the preparation of early childhood special educators through infant/early childhood mental health professional development; an examination of students'/graduates' educational experiences; and an examination of faculty members' longevity in educator preparation at UNC.

College of Humanities & Social Sciences

Kathy Johnson (Academic Year)

Department of Geography, GIS, & Sustainability

Title: The Climate Crisis and the Bipartisan Infrastructure Act

Summary: To secure a fellowship with a policy think tank, federal agency, or research institute that will enable me to participate as a resident scholar in the upcoming debates over the reauthorization of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Act of 2021.

College of Performing & Visual Arts

Kiki Gilderhus (Fall)

School of Art & Design

Title: An Introduction to Contemporary Art: The Art World, Art Market, & Professional Practices

Summary: In spring 2025, I was invited by Cognella academic publishers to write a textbook on contemporary art. The book is titled *An Introduction to Contemporary Art: The Art World, Art Market, & Professional Practices*. Per my contract, the manuscript is due fall 2026, and I am using the sabbatical to complete it.

Jim White (Spring)

School of Music

Title: Illuminating the Silence: Techniques to Develop Confidence in Your Groove

Summary: This proposal is to develop a new drum set method book. The book focuses on body motion and the importance of silence in maintaining a consistent tempo. It introduces techniques using a multi-rod stick and egg shaker to enhance confidence in drum set performance.