

Sabbatical Leave Procedure

BOR/SUOAF-AFSCME Contract | Article 24.8

Revised: 2026

Southern Connecticut State University

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1. Purpose and Authority

Contractual Foundation

This procedure implements BOR/SUOAF-AFSCME Contract Article 24.8, which provides for sabbatical leaves “granted only for the benefit and advancement of the Connecticut State University” and “for purposes of scholarly and creative endeavors that enhance the member’s professional competence.”

Scope and Application

This procedure applies to SUOAF-represented administrative faculty (herein referred to as “administrative faculty,” “SUOAF members,” or “members”) at Southern Connecticut State

University. All references to administrative faculty in this document refer specifically to SUOAF-represented positions unless otherwise noted.

Institutional Mission

Administrative faculty sabbaticals serve as a strategic investment in institutional excellence, providing dedicated time for professional development that directly benefits both the individual and Southern Connecticut State University. These competitive leaves support the university's R2 mission by enhancing administrative effectiveness, fostering innovation, and bringing external best practices to campus operations.

Process Authority

This process has been proposed by the Administrative Faculty Senate and approved by the University President as required by the collective bargaining agreement.

2. Eligibility Requirements

Service Requirements

- **Initial Eligibility:** Completion of six (6) years of full-time service at SCSU
- **Subsequent Eligibility:** After a sabbatical, eligibility is re-established after six (6) additional years of full-time service
- **Application Timing:** SUOAF members may apply during their sixth year of service
- **Appointment Status:** Only members with continuing appointment may take sabbatical leave
- **Presidential Waiver:** Time period waivers may be granted at the President's discretion

Professional Standing

- Must be in good standing with no active disciplinary actions
- Must demonstrate alignment with university mission and strategic priorities
- Must show capacity to complete proposed sabbatical project successfully

3. Types of Sabbatical Leave

SCSU offers three categories of sabbatical leave to accommodate different project scopes. All types share the same annual application deadline.

Type	Duration	Compensation	Application Deadline
Short-Term	2–8 weeks	Full pay	Annual deadline: October 1
Mid-Term	9–26 weeks	Full pay	Annual deadline: October 1
Long-Term	27–52 weeks	Half pay	Annual deadline: October 1

Short-Term Sabbaticals (2–8 weeks)

- Designed for focused professional development projects
- Ideal for conference attendance, short-term training, or intensive skill development
- Full compensation maintained

Mid-Term Sabbaticals (9–26 weeks)

- Suitable for substantial professional development or research projects
- Allows for semester-long or summer-focused initiatives
- Full compensation maintained

Long-Term Sabbaticals (27–52 weeks)

- Designed for comprehensive scholarly or creative projects
- May be structured as academic year or calendar year sabbaticals
- Half compensation provided

4. Application Process Overview

The sabbatical application process follows six sequential steps:

1. **Intent to Apply Submission** — due August 15 (45 days before the October 1 deadline)
2. **Application Development** — with Sabbatical Leave Committee guidance available
3. **Application Submission** — by October 1
4. **Multi-Level Review Process** — 30-day review cycle beginning October 1
5. **Presidential Decision** — final approval
6. **Implementation Planning** — upon approval

Annual Application Deadline

All sabbatical types — Short-Term, Mid-Term, and Long-Term — share a single annual application cycle. The type of sabbatical determines duration and compensation; it does not determine the application pathway.

Step	Intent to Apply Due	Full Application Due	Sabbatical May Begin
All sabbatical types	August 15	October 1	Following July 1 or agreed date

Applications submitted via the Exception Request process (see Section 11) may have different timelines as determined by the AFS President.

Intent to Apply Process

Purpose

The Intent to Apply form serves multiple functions:

- Initiates early guidance and support from the Sabbatical Leave Committee
- Triggers preliminary operational planning discussions
- Enables proactive resource planning and coordination
- Provides opportunity for proposal refinement before full submission

Requirements

- Must be submitted by August 15 — 45 days prior to the October 1 full application deadline
- Includes preliminary project information, a gap or problem statement, and foundational literature
- Identifies support needs and consultation preferences
- Triggers notifications to supervisor, Vice President, and Human Resources

Committee Response

Upon receipt of the Intent to Apply form, the Sabbatical Leave Committee will:

- Provide initial assessment and feedback
- Offer guidance on proposal development
- Schedule consultations if requested
- Notify relevant administrators to begin preliminary planning
- Provide specialized resources for different sabbatical types

Early Planning Benefits

- Allows time for proposal refinement based on committee feedback
- Enables supervisors and VPs to begin operational coverage planning
- Provides opportunity to identify and address potential challenges
- Facilitates alignment with institutional priorities and strategic goals

Application Requirements

Complete Application Package

All sabbatical applications must include:

7. **Completed Sabbatical Leave Request and Recommendation Form**
8. **Comprehensive Project Proposal** (detailed below)
9. **Supporting Documentation** (as applicable)

Note: The Sabbatical Leave Self-Assessment is an optional workshop tool available to applicants. It is not required for submission and will not be evaluated as part of the formal application. See Section 13 for details.

Project Proposal Components

I. Project Overview

- **Title of Project**
- **Brief Summary** (100–200 words)

II. Project Merit and Alignment (25% of evaluation)

- **Statement of Purpose and Objectives:** Clear articulation of project goals
- **Alignment with University Mission:** Connection to SCSU's R2 mission and strategic priorities
- **Scholarly and Professional Merit:** Contribution to field, grounded in relevant literature or research

III. Institutional Benefit (25% of evaluation)

- **Operational Enhancement:** How the project will improve administrative processes or services
- **Knowledge Transfer Plan:** Detailed strategy for sharing acquired knowledge across the institution
- **Lasting Impact:** Expected long-term institutional benefits with measurable outcomes

IV. Feasibility and Planning (20% of evaluation)

- **Project Timeline:** Detailed schedule with milestones and deliverables
- **Impact on Operations:** Analysis of potential effects on departmental operations during absence
- **Resource Requirements:** Detailed resource needs with justification

V. Applicant Readiness (15% of evaluation)

- **Scholarly Foundation and Preparation:** Existing knowledge, preliminary work, and engagement with relevant literature or research. Applications should demonstrate awareness of the scholarly or professional field the project engages. Include citations to relevant literature, professional reports, or institutional research.
- **Professional Track Record:** Recent performance achievements relevant to the project
- **Clarity of Purpose:** Connection between sabbatical and professional development goals

VI. Special Considerations (15% of evaluation)

- **Timing and Opportunity:** Justification for the specific timing of this sabbatical. If applying via the Exception Request process rather than the standard October 1 deadline, explain the circumstances that necessitated that pathway.
- **Innovation and Distinction:** Unique or innovative elements of the project
- **External Visibility:** Potential for external recognition or institutional visibility

VII. Expected Outcomes

- **Specific Deliverables:** Concrete products expected from the sabbatical
- **Relationship to Previous Work:** Connection to prior sabbatical projects (if applicable)

Review and Approval Process

Multi-Level Review Structure

Each application undergoes systematic review at four levels:

10. **Supervisor Review** (Days 1–10)
11. **Vice President Review** (Days 11–20)
12. **Sabbatical Leave Committee Review** (Days 21–30)

13. **Presidential Review and Final Decision** (Days 31+)

Total processing time is approximately 30+ days from the October 1 submission to final decision.

Supervisor Review (10 calendar days)

Responsibilities:

- Evaluate application merit using established criteria
- Assess applicant's professional standing and readiness
- Provide preliminary assessment of operational impacts
- Make recommendation for approval or suggest revisions
- Forward application with recommendation to Vice President

Written Justification Requirement: If the Supervisor does not recommend approval, they must provide written justification to the member explaining the specific reasons for the negative recommendation.

Right to Proceed: If the Supervisor does not recommend approval, the application may still proceed to the next level. Applicants are strongly encouraged to work with the Supervisor to address concerns or may choose to revise and resubmit their application.

Focus Areas:

- Project quality and feasibility
- Applicant's track record and capabilities
- Departmental context and operational considerations
- Alignment with departmental goals

Vice President Review (10 calendar days)

Responsibilities:

- Review application from divisional strategic perspective
- Evaluate alignment with institutional priorities
- Develop comprehensive operational coverage plan in consultation with supervisor
- Consider resource allocation and interim leadership opportunities
- Make recommendation and forward to Sabbatical Leave Committee

Written Justification Requirement: If the Vice President does not recommend approval, they must provide written justification to the member explaining the specific reasons for the negative recommendation.

Right to Proceed: If the Vice President does not recommend approval, the application may still proceed to the next level. Applicants are strongly encouraged to work with the Vice President to address concerns or may choose to revise and resubmit their application.

Strategic Considerations:

- Divisional strategic alignment
- Cross-departmental impact potential
- Resource allocation optimization
- Leadership development opportunities
- Institutional benefit maximization

Sabbatical Leave Committee Review (10 calendar days)

Composition: Five (5) SUOAF members who also serve on the Administrative Faculty Senate. This may include up to two (2) representatives appointed by the SUOAF Chapter President in consultation with the Administrative Faculty Senate President.

Responsibilities:

- Apply standardized evaluation rubric
- Score applications across all criteria categories
- Provide comprehensive recommendation to President
- Document rationale for recommendations

Written Justification Requirement: If the Sabbatical Leave Committee does not recommend approval, they must provide written justification to the member explaining the specific reasons for the negative recommendation.

Evaluation Process:

- Detailed scoring using weighted rubric (see Section 5)
- Holistic assessment of institutional benefit
- Written justification for recommendations

Presidential Review and Final Decision**Presidential Authority:**

- Final approval authority for all sabbatical leaves
- Discretionary waiver authority for service requirements
- Resource allocation oversight
- Strategic institutional perspective

Decision Considerations:

- Alignment with institutional mission and strategic priorities
- Potential for significant institutional impact
- Resource stewardship and operational feasibility
- Equity in sabbatical distribution across divisions
- Integration with broader institutional planning

5. Evaluation Criteria

Applications are evaluated using a weighted rubric system that ensures consistent, fair assessment:

Scoring System

- **Scale:** 1–4 points per criterion (4 = exceptional, 3 = good, 2 = acceptable, 1 = needs improvement)
- **Weighted Calculation:** Each criterion score is multiplied by its designated weight percentage
- **Total Score:** Sum of all weighted scores (maximum 4.0)

Detailed Criteria and Weights

Project Merit and Alignment (25% total weight)

- **Professional Development Value (10%):** Extent to which the project enhances professional competence
- **Alignment with University Mission (10%):** Connection to SCSU's R2 mission and strategic goals
- **Scholarly and Professional Merit (5%):** Quality and originality of the proposed work, grounded in relevant literature or research

Institutional Benefit (25% total weight)

- **Operational Enhancement (10%):** Potential to improve administrative processes or services
- **Knowledge Transfer Plan (10%):** Quality and feasibility of plan for sharing acquired knowledge
- **Lasting Impact (5%):** Expected long-term benefits with measurable outcomes

Feasibility and Planning (20% total weight)

- **Project Planning (7%):** Quality of timeline, milestones, and deliverables
- **Operational Coverage (7%):** Assessment of impact on operations and coverage planning
- **Resource Appropriateness (6%):** Reasonableness of resource requirements and justification

Applicant Readiness (15% total weight)

- **Experience & Preparation (5%):** Relevant background, preliminary work, and scholarly grounding
- **Professional Track Record (5%):** Recent achievements and performance
- **Clarity of Purpose (5%):** Clear connection between sabbatical and professional goals

Special Considerations (15% total weight)

- **Timing & Opportunity (5%):** Justification for specific sabbatical timing
- **Innovation & Distinction (5%):** Unique or innovative project elements
- **External Visibility (5%):** Potential for external recognition or institutional visibility

Recommendation Guidelines

Based on total weighted scores:

- **3.5–4.0:** Strongly Recommend Approval
- **3.0–3.4:** Recommend Approval
- **2.5–2.9:** Recommend Approval with Revisions
- **2.0–2.4:** Consider Approval with Significant Revisions
- **Below 2.0:** Do Not Recommend Approval

6. Operational Coverage Requirements

Shared Responsibility Model

Operational coverage planning is a collaborative responsibility between supervisors and Vice Presidents, with input from the sabbatical applicant as appropriate.

Coverage Planning Principles

- Maintain essential services and functions during the sabbatical period
- Distribute responsibilities to avoid overburdening any single individual
- Identify professional development opportunities for remaining staff
- Assess and potentially improve workflow efficiency
- Build organizational resilience through cross-training

Coverage Strategies

Temporary Redistribution

- Distribute essential duties among existing team members
- Prioritize critical functions while temporarily deferring less urgent tasks
- Create temporary reporting relationships as needed

Interim Leadership Development

- Identify staff members ready for expanded responsibilities
- Provide appropriate training and support for interim roles
- Use sabbatical period as professional development opportunity for others

Cross-Departmental Collaboration

- Leverage partnerships with other departments for shared responsibilities
- Identify opportunities for cross-training and skill sharing
- Build stronger interdepartmental relationships

Process Improvement

- Use sabbatical period to test workflow modifications
- Identify functions that could be streamlined or eliminated
- Implement new technologies or procedures

Documentation Requirements

- Coverage plans must be developed and documented before sabbatical begins

- Clear communication of temporary arrangements to all affected parties
- Regular check-ins scheduled to assess coverage effectiveness
- Contingency plans for unexpected challenges

7. Compensation and Benefits

Salary Structure

According to BOR/SUOAF-AFSCME Contract Article 24.8:

- **Full pay:** For sabbatical leaves up to one-half (1/2) year (26 weeks)
- **Half pay:** For leaves greater than one-half (1/2) year but less than or equal to one (1) full year

Benefits and Adjustments

During sabbatical leave, members:

- Remain eligible for all scheduled salary adjustments
- Continue to receive all applicable benefits that would have been provided if not on leave
- Maintain standard university benefits including health insurance, retirement contributions, and other contractual benefits

Sabbatical Categories and Compensation

- **Short-Term (2–8 weeks):** Full pay
- **Mid-Term (9–26 weeks):** Full pay
- **Long-Term (27–52 weeks):** Half pay

8. Sabbatical Implementation

University Resources and Support

Members applying for and on sabbatical shall have access to university resources as appropriate, including SUOAF professional development funds, travel support, and other resources as allowed by university and contract policies. Access to institutional resources should be coordinated through appropriate administrative channels.

Pre-Sabbatical Preparation

Administrative Tasks

- Finalize operational coverage arrangements
- Complete necessary paperwork with Human Resources
- Brief interim coverage personnel on ongoing responsibilities
- Establish communication protocols for sabbatical period

Project Preparation

- Confirm project timeline and milestones

- Secure necessary resources and access
- Establish external partnerships or collaborations as needed
- Set up systems for progress documentation

During the Sabbatical

Project Implementation

- Follow approved project timeline and deliverables
- Maintain appropriate documentation of activities and progress
- Engage in planned professional development activities
- Build external networks and partnerships as applicable

University Connection

- Maintain minimal contact with campus as agreed upon in coverage plan
- Participate in emergency consultations only if specifically requested
- Avoid regular operational responsibilities during sabbatical period

Progress Monitoring

- Document project progress and outcomes
- Maintain records of professional development activities
- Prepare materials for required post-sabbatical reporting

9. Return Requirements

Immediate Return Obligations

Reporting Requirements

- Submit written report on sabbatical activities and outcomes within 30 days of return
- Present sabbatical project results to the Administrative Faculty Senate
- Present to broader university community as appropriate
- Provide detailed account of institutional benefits realized

Knowledge Transfer Implementation

Required Activities

- Implement knowledge transfer plan as outlined in original application
- Share acquired skills and knowledge with colleagues
- Provide training or workshops as specified in proposal
- Document institutional improvements or innovations implemented

Ongoing Responsibilities

- Apply acquired knowledge to enhance job performance
- Serve as resource for colleagues in areas of sabbatical expertise
- Participate in institutional initiatives related to sabbatical focus area
- Contribute to institutional reputation through continued external engagement

10. Administrative Authority

Timeline Modifications

The Administrative Faculty Senate President has the authority to:

- Waive deadline requirements in exceptional circumstances
- Extend existing deadlines when justified
- Expedite review timelines when appropriate
- Modify review processes to accommodate special circumstances

Presidential Discretionary Authority

The University President retains the following discretionary powers:

- Approval or denial of all sabbatical applications
- Waiver of six-year service requirements when circumstances warrant
- Modification of sabbatical terms or conditions
- Integration of sabbatical decisions with broader institutional planning

11. Deadline Exception Process

The annual October 1 deadline is designed to serve the majority of applicants. The Exception Request process exists for situations where a compelling professional opportunity arises outside the normal application window, or where documented circumstances prevented timely submission.

Exception Request Requirements

- Submit formal Sabbatical Deadline Exception Request form to the Administrative Faculty Senate President
- Provide detailed justification for exception
- Document any extenuating circumstances
- Include impact assessment if exception is not granted

Exceptional Circumstances may include an unexpected professional opportunity with time constraints, a shift in institutional or divisional priorities, a medical or family emergency, or other documented circumstances that prevented timely submission.

Decision Authority

- Administrative Faculty Senate President has sole discretion for deadline exceptions
- Decisions must be documented with rationale
- Affected parties must be notified of decision
- Exception decisions may include conditions or modifications

Presidential Discretionary Authority

The University President retains the following discretionary powers:

- Approval or denial of all sabbatical applications
- Waiver of six-year service requirements when circumstances warrant
- Modification of sabbatical terms or conditions
- Integration of sabbatical decisions with broader institutional planning

12. Right to Proceed and Revision Options

SUOAF members retain the right to have their application reviewed at all levels even if not recommended at earlier stages. Applications that receive Sabbatical Leave Committee approval will be forwarded to the President for final review regardless of earlier recommendations.

Revision and Resubmission: Members whose applications are not approved at any level may revise, clarify, and resubmit their application for a subsequent application cycle. Members are encouraged to work with reviewers to understand concerns and strengthen their proposals for resubmission.

Appeals Process: Members who believe their application was unfairly denied may revise and resubmit their application, incorporating feedback received during the review process.

13. Forms and Resources

Required Forms

14. Intent to Apply for Administrative Faculty Sabbatical Leave

- Must be submitted by August 15 — 45 days prior to the October 1 application deadline
- Includes preliminary project information, gap or problem statement, foundational literature, support needs assessment, and consultation preferences
- Triggers committee outreach and supervisor/VP/HR notification

15. Sabbatical Leave Request and Recommendation Form

- Complete application with detailed project proposal
- Required signatures and multi-level recommendations
- Submitted to supervisor by October 1

16. Sabbatical Deadline Exception Request (if needed)

- For requesting modifications to the standard annual deadline
- Submit to Administrative Faculty Senate President

Optional Tool

Sabbatical Leave Self-Assessment: An optional workshop tool available to support applicants at any stage of the proposal development process. Applicants may use it independently or share it with the Sabbatical Leave Committee during a pre-submission consultation. It is not required for submission and will not be evaluated as part of the formal application.

All forms are available on the Administrative Faculty Senate (AFS) website: [SouthernCT.edu/afs](https://southernct.edu/afs).

Form Administration: The Sabbatical Leave Committee may update forms for clarity, formatting, technical corrections, or administrative efficiency without additional approval, provided such updates do not modify the substantive requirements, evaluation criteria, or procedural timelines established in this procedure.

14. Support Resources

Committee Support

- Sabbatical Leave Committee Chair available for pre-submission consultations
- Guidance on proposal development and alignment with evaluation criteria
- Feedback on draft applications, if requested through the Intent to Apply process
- Sabbatical Information Sessions offered to all SUOAF members

Administrative Support

- Human Resources for benefits and compensation questions
- Supervisors and Vice Presidents for operational planning
- Administrative Faculty Senate President for procedural questions

Additional Information

For detailed information about the sabbatical process, evaluation criteria, or operational planning strategies, contact:

- Sabbatical Leave Committee Chair — see AFS website for current contact information
- Administrative Faculty Senate President — see AFS website for current contact information
- Human Resources — inside.southernct.edu/human-resources

15. Conclusion

The SUOAF Administrative Faculty Sabbatical Leave Program represents Southern Connecticut State University's commitment to professional excellence and institutional advancement. Through this process, the university invests in its administrative faculty while ensuring that sabbatical opportunities contribute meaningfully to institutional mission and strategic priorities.

This procedure ensures fair, consistent evaluation of sabbatical applications while maintaining operational excellence and supporting the professional growth that enhances the university's capacity to serve students and the broader community.

Effective Date: Spring 2026

This procedure implements BOR/SUOAF-AFSCME Contract Article 24.8 and supersedes all previous sabbatical leave procedures for administrative faculty.