



## **POLICIES REGARDING FACULTY LEAVES and SHORT-TERM ABSENCES**

- *Excerpted from the GSD [Faculty Policies Handbook](#), pages 37-42, revised Spring 2021.*
- *In the case of a discrepancy between this document and the Handbook, the language in the Handbook shall override this document.*

The School's responsibility to maintain a consistent educational environment with high-quality instruction must be balanced by its obligation to assist faculty in maintaining their personal creative work in scholarship and/or design.

When leaves and short-term absences from residence will contribute to the creative activities or professional expertise of members of the faculty, they shall work with the chairs of their departments to plan for such leaves and short-term absences sufficiently in advance to permit satisfactory coverage of the faculty member's instructional and administrative responsibilities. The granting of leaves and short-term absences is dependent upon securing a satisfactory replacement to offer instruction and on the department's ability to maintain the services of academic administration. Faculty requesting leaves must receive written confirmation of approval before absenting themselves from residency. (See the Conflict of Commitment Policies regarding teaching at other institutions while on leave.) Several different types of leaves and short-term absences are possible, as described below. Applicable forms are in the Appendix. For additional information, contact the Assistant Dean for Faculty Affairs (Pamela Baldwin).

### **Short-term Absences from the GSD**

Short-term absences from the GSD during the school term, including during weeks of instruction as well as during the reading, review and examination periods, are subject to specific rules. All faculty members whose absence results in missing a class, studio, exam, review, or required administrative assignment including departmental faculty meetings must obtain approval in advance from the department chair. Faculty holding full-time appointments who will be absent from the GSD for a period not exceeding three days, assuming the absence does not involve missing a class, studio, exam, review, or required administrative assignment including departmental faculty meetings, need only tell the assistant to the chair where the faculty member may be reached during the absence.

Absences for more than three days up to one week must be requested on the appropriate form a minimum of one week in advance and requires approval of the department chair and the dean.

Absences for more than one week must be requested on the appropriate form a minimum of one month in advance and require approval of the department chair and the dean. Note that absences for more than one week may be subject to a reduction in salary. Part-time faculty members must follow their contractual agreements for teaching and administrative responsibilities, and approval for absences that conflict with those responsibilities must be obtained from the department chair and the dean a minimum of one week in advance.

Applicable forms are in the Appendix. For additional information, contact the Assistant Dean for Faculty Affairs (Pamela Baldwin).

*Overall Limit on Outside Activities:* In keeping with the *Harvard Corporation Statement on Outside Activities*

Full-time faculty members are expected to devote no more than 20% of their professional effort to outside activities during the academic year. Part-time faculty whose commitment is more than halftime should adhere to the 20% rule appropriately adjusted to their part-time status.

### *Mandatory Paid Sick Time for Paid Academic Teaching and Research Appointees*

Harvard observes the provisions of the Massachusetts Paid Sick Time Law (“the Law”). The Law entitles Harvard employees, including those on paid academic teaching and research appointments (e.g. academic appointees), to a guaranteed minimum amount of paid sick time each year: specifically, one hour of sick time for every 30 hours worked, up to 40 hours of paid sick time per academic year (from July 1 to June 30). Under the Law, full-time academic appointees are entitled to 40 hours of sick time each academic year, as are part-time academic appointees scheduled to work at least 1200 hours in an academic year. In the case of other part-time academic appointees, the amount of sick time is based on an academic appointee’s specified weekly hours.<sup>1</sup> Special rules apply to adjunct faculty members, as set forth below.<sup>2</sup> Harvard grants academic appointees their full entitlement as of July 1, 2015 (the effective date of the Law), and thereafter, as of the start of each academic year, except that individuals hired on a semester basis instead receive their full entitlement at the start of the semester. Unused sick time does not roll over from one academic year to the next.

Employees can use paid sick time to care for a physical or mental illness, injury or condition affecting the employee or the employee’s child, spouse, parent, or parent of a spouse, to attend routine medical appointments for these individuals, and to address the psychological, physical or legal effects of domestic violence on the employee or the employee’s family member. Individuals may not be treated adversely because they have exercised their rights under the Law, including in taking earned sick time.

In most cases, Harvard’s existing sick leave policies are more generous than the minimum sick time allotments mandated by the Law. Where individuals already are entitled to equivalent or more favorable sick pay benefits under existing Harvard policies, the Harvard policy will apply. Holders of academic appointments should follow their School and Department’s normal protocols for advance notice (unless the need for sick time is not foreseeable), including when the need for sick time will conflict with normally scheduled class hours. For questions concerning sick leave entitlement, please refer to the School’s faculty handbook or contact Pamela Baldwin, Assistant Dean for Faculty Affairs.

### **Extended Leaves Requiring Sustained Absence from Periods of Instruction**

#### *Paid Sabbatical Leaves for Tenured Faculty*

Individuals holding the position of tenured professor or tenured professor in practice may be granted paid sabbatical leave for personal study or to conduct design and/or scholarly activities. Obligations to doctoral students must be fulfilled. It is expected that faculty on half-year sabbatical teach their required course(s) during the semester they are in residence. Teaching courses at another institution requires permission of the dean and the Corporation. Sabbatical leaves may be requested after twelve full academic terms of continuous or discontinuous service in regular academic status. Sabbatical leave may be granted for one academic year at half the base salary or for one term at the full base salary. Sabbatical leaves may not be linked with unpaid professional leaves as described below and must be preceded by three years active duty in residence.

Applications for sabbatical leave shall be made a minimum of six months in advance on the appropriate form and with a brief description of the intended creative activity appended. Recommendations by the department chair and the dean are required. Credit for sabbatical leave may not be accrued beyond twelve terms. Tenured professors in practice accrue sabbatical leave based on the average full-time

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<sup>1</sup> This is determined as follows: (1) multiply the specified weekly hours by the number of weeks of the appointment in the applicable academic year and (2) divide that figure by 30.

<sup>2</sup> According to regulations issued by the Office of the Attorney General, adjunct faculty members are deemed to work 3 hours outside the classroom for every classroom hour for purposes of the Law. For example, an adjunct faculty member teaching a 3-credit course in a 15-week semester would be deemed to work a total of twelve hours each week (3 classroom hours and 9 non-classroom hours) for a total of 180 hours in the semester, thus earning six paid sick time hours in that semester (calculated by dividing the 180 hour total by 30 (the rate of accrual).

equivalence of their appointments for the previous twelve terms of active service. Persons requesting sabbatical leave are expected to return to Harvard for a minimum of one full year at regular status following the leave or to refund the amount of the salary paid during the leave.

#### *Tenure Track Associate Professor Leave*

Associate professors who have been appointed or promoted to the position may be granted, normally after at least one year in the position, a paid semester of leave to conduct scholarly or design activities that will be of significant benefit to their professional development and academic career. This option is *not* available to associate professors in practice. One term of teaching is the equivalent of three faculty workload points, as described on page 16. Individuals receiving such release should expect to teach their required course that year, if applicable. Obligations to thesis students must be fulfilled. Teaching at another institution requires permission of the dean and the corporation and is allowed only when on unpaid leave from the GSD and not during a paid leave. Associate Professor Leave does not extend the end date of the term of appointment.

#### *Unpaid Professional Leaves*

Professors, professors in practice, non-tenured professors in practice, senior lecturers, associate and assistant professor in practice, and associate and assistant professors may be granted full or partial leaves of one term up to a maximum of one year without pay to conduct design or research or to pursue their personal creative work in residence at Harvard. Permission of the dean and the Corporation is required for teaching at another institution. Requests shall be made on the appropriate form a minimum of six months in advance.

Recommendations by the department chair and the dean are required. Normally there must be three years of service at regular academic status since the previous unpaid leave or sabbatical. Unpaid leaves may not be granted for more than one year and may not be linked with sabbatical leaves, or, in the case of associate professors, with a release from instruction. Obligations to thesis and doctoral students must be fulfilled. A second successive year of unpaid professional leave may be granted to tenured faculty only under unusual circumstances such as for national service or other reasons of strong public benefit. Leave for more than two successive years will not be granted; resignation from the Harvard appointment is the only alternative to returning to regular academic status at the university after two successive years of leave. Associate professors who have been appointed for a three- to five-year term are eligible for unpaid leave at the discretion of the department chair. Assistant professors are eligible to apply for unpaid leave after their third year of appointment.

During an unpaid leave, no contributions are made by the university to the retirement fund; however, health plan benefits, life insurance, and disability insurance may continue to be in effect provided the individual makes the arrangements in advance and continues to pay the same share of the costs for the benefits that would have been assumed if the person were not on leave. An extension to a junior faculty appointment may be granted for unpaid professional leave, up to a maximum of one year in the ranks of assistant and associate professor combined.

#### *Unpaid Personal Leaves*

The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA) requires Harvard to grant eligible faculty up to twelve weeks of unpaid leave (to be taken and completed during a twelve-month period) for any of the following reasons: (1) to care for the faculty member's child within twelve months of birth, adoption, or the initiation of foster care; (2) to care for a parent, child, or spouse with a serious health condition; or (3) because the faculty member's own serious health condition makes the faculty member unable to perform his or her job.

Faculty members and those holding professional research appointments are eligible for the provisions of FMLA if they have held at least a half-time appointment at Harvard for three consecutive months or more, except in the case of maternity leave eligibility, which begins immediately upon appointment. The

university will continue to make the standard contribution to group health insurance during a leave covered by FMLA.

The GSD will automatically count all maternity, parental, and medical leave described below (whether paid or unpaid) toward the fulfillment of the FMLA twelve-week leave requirement, even if the eligible faculty member does not specify that he or she is taking an FMLA leave. Those holding faculty and professional research appointments who are eligible for FMLA coverage may take no more than twelve weeks of leave during each twelve-month period beginning on the first day any FMLA leave is used. However, exhaustion of the twelve weeks of leave provided for in the FMLA will not necessarily limit an individual's eligibility for additional leaves as provided for by GSD policy. The same employment benefits under the same conditions described for unpaid leaves apply to personal leaves.

#### *Paid Medical Leave*

Members of the tenured or junior faculty suffering from any temporary physical or mental impairment of health, including complications of pregnancy or childbirth, which prevents the fulfillment of normal duties may be entitled to paid medical leave (prorated for part-time appointments) of absence of up to six months, not to extend beyond the termination date of the appointment. Medical certification in support of the leave is required; approval by the dean is also required. If the illness is prolonged, use of the University Disability Plan should be investigated. Please contact Pamela Baldwin, Assistant Dean for Faculty Affairs, with questions.

#### *Paid Maternity Leave*

Tenured and junior faculty who have full-time appointments may receive a paid eight-week leave from instruction and administrative responsibilities for pregnancy and childbirth. Alternatively, a program of relief from obligations for instruction, while maintaining advising and administrative responsibilities, can be tailored on an individual basis. This might include a release from teaching for one term or a reduction in teaching load over the academic year. The equivalent of one term of teaching is usually equal to three workload points, as described on page 16. Because personal circumstances vary in relation to the academic calendar, an individual is urged to consult, as early as possible, with her chair or with the Assistant Dean.

If complications of pregnancy and childbirth should occur, such that the individual cannot fulfill her normal duties, she is ordinarily entitled to a paid medical leave of absence of up to six months, not to extend beyond the termination date of her appointment. The maximum amount of paid leave for both medical and maternity leave combined is six months. A request for a medical leave should be discussed with the Executive Dean and a written request sent to the dean with a copy to the department chair. The request should be accompanied by medical certification in support of the leave and approval by the dean is required. See below for extension of appointment for childcare responsibilities. Paid maternity leave is not available to non-ladder faculty (e.g., multi-years or annual visitors), however non-ladder faculty are eligible to receive up to one-week paid medical leave (prorated for part-time appointments).

#### *Primary Caregiver*

A primary caregiver is defined as the sole caregiver for a newborn or newly adopted child who provides substantial daily responsibility for child care at least twenty hours per week from Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. This policy is not intended for parents who have a newborn or newly adopted child that is cared for more than half time by either a spouse/partner and/or a childcare provider.

#### *Parental Leave*

Tenured and junior faculty (both female and male) who have full-time appointments and who will assume primary care responsibilities for a newborn or newly adopted child may be granted leave under the same conditions as maternity leave described above. Recommendation by department chair and approval by the dean is required.

### *Part-time Option for Primary Caregivers*

Tenured or junior faculty who have full-time appointments and who are the primary caregivers for children or for sick or disabled parents have the option of reducing their time commitment to no less than .50 FTE for up to a maximum of two years. Salary and benefits will be adjusted proportionately, as will the term of appointment. For example, two years at .50 FTE would result in an extension of a junior faculty members' appointment by one year. A senior faculty member's eligibility for a sabbatical leave would be affected in that two years at .50 FTE would be equivalent to accruing one year at full-time toward such a leave. A request for this part-time option must be submitted in writing to the department chair and to the dean. It should be requested as much in advance as possible, preferably at least four months.

### *Extension of Appointment for Junior Faculty*

The maximum total time in service for a full-time assistant or associate professor is ten years of active service plus up to two years of approved extension. Extensions are given for approved unpaid professional leave up to a maximum of one year in the ranks of assistant and associate professor combined. Extensions may also be granted for medical leave, primary child care responsibility, parental leave, and/or the birth or adoption of a child. All full-time faculty (including fathers/same-sex partners) who have a newborn or newly adopted child during their assistant or associate professor appointment will be eligible for a one-year extension, provided it doesn't exceed the maximum of twelve years in the junior faculty ranks in any combination of active service, unpaid leaves, paid leaves, etc. The extension would normally be granted at least twelve months before the expiration of the current contract and would be for one year per child for a maximum of two years. Normally, a maximum of one extension would be granted during the assistant professor term. The request for extension should be made on the appropriate form. Recommendation by the department chair is required, and the extension of term is subject to approval by the dean. A maximum of two years of extension can be granted to an individual, one for unpaid leave and one or two for childcare.