

College of Liberal Arts Faculty Development Leave Guidelines

FACULTY DEVELOPMENT LEAVE (FDL) OVERVIEW

As defined in the [Texas Education Code](#), an FDL is a leave of absence for a faculty member to dedicate time and effort “for study, research, writing, field observations, or other suitable purpose.”

All FDLs must follow [Texas Education Code](#) and the following UT Austin FDL requirements:

1. To be eligible for any kind of FDL, the faculty member must have served as a full-time faculty member of UT Austin for at least two consecutive full academic years at some point before the start of the FDL.
2. Not more than 6% of each CSU’s faculty can have an FDL each academic year (based on the previous academic year’s headcount of tenured/tenure-track faculty).
3. Applications for any kind of FDL must be reviewed by a committee that includes elected faculty
4. Upon completion of an FDL, the faculty member has a return obligation such that they must either
 - a. Return to work at UT Austin for the fall and spring terms following conclusion of the FDL, or
 - b. Repay UT Austin for all the costs of the FDL (the total compensation including fringe benefits).

When an external grant, fellowship, residency, contract, or other external opportunity buys out a faculty member’s teaching or service, or when there is a faculty professional leave without pay, the dean will decide on a case-by-case basis as to whether this qualifies as an FDL based on the specifics of the individual’s circumstances in relation to the [Texas Education Code](#). If it is determined that the circumstances fit the definition of an FDL, the faculty member will be invited to apply for a COLA-FDL using an ad hoc process that includes review by the elected committee and process described below.

**Note that FDLs are distinct from course releases that result in 0-teaching loads. FDLs release faculty from normal University obligations so they can focus solely on research. Course releases that result in 0-loads are for teaching release only; faculty are expected to fulfill other University obligations and duties.*

FDL COMMITTEE CHARGE

The College of Liberal Arts *Faculty Leaves and Awards Committee* will review FDL research leave requests and other faculty research award competitions for College of Liberal Arts faculty. The full committee or a sub-set of the committee will be tasked with reviewing the following programs:

- UT-FDLs
- COLA-FDLs
- External Fellowship-FDLs
- Littlefield and Ransom Faculty Fellows
- Editorial Graduate Research Assistantships Awards
- Subvention Grants
- Other University-level or College-level awards as needed

FDL COMMITTEE ELECTION

Committee Membership

- The College of Liberal Arts *Faculty Leaves and Awards Committee* will be comprised of six elected faculty members and three appointed faculty members plus ex officio members, the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and the Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.
- To ensure appropriate representation, each of the nine faculty representatives must hold appointments in different departments.
- Elected and appointed faculty will serve two-year terms, serving no more than two consecutive terms.
- Criteria for nominee eligibility:
 - Tenured faculty members who hold primary or joint appointments in the College of Liberal Arts
 - Nominees cannot intend to apply for an FDL while serving on the committee

Nomination and Election Process

- A call for nominations will go to Department Chairs in August. Chairs may submit up to one nominee each, based on eligibility criteria above.
- Each candidate will be entered into a college-wide election. Open elections will occur in late August-early September.
- Anonymous voting will be conducted via Qualtrics survey under the following conditions:
 - All College of Liberal Arts tenured and tenure-track faculty are eligible to vote.
 - Faculty may vote only once.
 - Faculty may vote for up to three candidates.
- The six top-ranked candidates will be invited to serve on the committee. The Dean's Office will appoint three more faculty to serve, selected from remaining nominees or other eligible faculty. Dean's Office appointments will balance committee representation based on discipline and department size.

FDL COMMITTEE REVIEW PROCESS

- The UT-FDL application period occurs annually in Sept-Oct based on Provost's Office deadlines.
- The College of Liberal Arts Dean's Office will review all applications for eligibility and remove ineligible applicants. The offices of Academic Affairs and Human Resources will be responsible for communication, verifying eligibility and tracking.
- Department chairs will rank applicants from their departments and submit a brief narrative statement that includes the acceptable number of faculty leaves that will allow the department to meet instructional needs, as well as other relevant information on strategic and/or research priorities that informed ranking decisions.
- The College's *Faculty Leaves and Awards Committee* will review UT-FDL applications, along with the chair rankings and narrative statements, in Oct-Nov based on Provost's Office deadlines.
- The committee's review and recommendation should reflect the professional, evidence-based judgment of each member involved and must not be positively or negatively influenced by a candidate's race, color, religion, national origin, sex (including pregnancy), age, disability, citizenship, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.
- When evaluating applications, committee members should consider UT-FDL core eligibility criteria, the quality of the leave proposal, and recent course release and/or other leaves.

UT-FDL CRITERIA AND APPLICATION MATERIALS

UT-FDL Core Eligibility Criteria

- Core timing (6 full academic years including two consecutive full-time years at UT Austin),
- Title series/ranks (applicants must be already tenured when applying),
- Demonstrated excellence in history of and trajectory in research, scholarship, and creative endeavors, and that
- Recipients must have met or exceeded expectations in at least three of the most recent academic years preceding the application for the FDL.

UT-FDL Application Materials

- **Short CV** (*limit: four pages*)
- **FDL Proposal** that includes:
 - **Abstract** (*limit: 100 words*) that briefly summarizes the purpose of the proposed FDL. The Abstract should not use unnecessary acronyms and should include the following information:
 - The location where the faculty member will engage in the FDL activities.
 - Research, scholarship, and creative endeavors that will occur during the FDL.
 - Benefits and anticipated impact of the FDL on the
 - Faculty member's professional development with regard to their research/scholarly/creative endeavors, and on the
 - Faculty member's department, college/school and the university.
 - **Leave Proposal** (*limit: 2,000 words*) that describes and justifies the proposed research, scholarship and creative endeavors and the need for the FDL, the location where the faculty will do the work during the FDL, which type of FDL is requested (full-time for one long semester or half-time in each of two long semesters), details about the planned leave activities and how the leave activities will contribute to the further development of the candidate's research/scholarship/creative endeavors.
 - **Bibliography** (*optional; limit: two pages*)
 - **Letter of invitation** required only if the FDL is to be hosted elsewhere (e.g., national lab, another institution of higher education, etc.).