

Sesquicentennial Leave Policy

Prepared by the SEAS Faculty Council

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Opportunities for faculty to spend a period of time in concentrated and uninterrupted scholarly work are essential to maintaining a vital faculty. This time may involve developing new areas of research, collaborations with colleagues at other universities or laboratories or in industry, or other scholarly pursuits. It is the policy of the School of Engineering and Applied Science (SEAS) to encourage faculty to avail themselves of appropriate scholarly opportunities.

The SEAS policy is that, to the extent possible, tenure-track faculty should qualify for Sesquicentennial leave on a seven-year cycle, comparable to programs at most top universities. In special cases, assistant professors may also qualify for a first Sesquicentennial leave after the first (three-year) contract renewal, thereafter on a seven-year cycle.

The application for a Sesquicentennial leave should contain a proposal of the scholarly activity to be pursued and information pertaining to previous scholarly leaves. The proposal need not be long, but it should be comprehensive. It should address the character of the work, its impact on the future scholarly work of the candidate, the possible broadening or exposure to new ideas and advances, and anticipated travel to or residency at other institutions. The proposal should make clear the timing and term of the request. A Sesquicentennial leave may be one semester at full pay or two semesters at half pay. Where possible, alternate times should be indicated.

Sesquicentennial proposals will be reviewed, prioritized and recommended by the candidate's department. It is to be emphasized that the award of a Sesquicentennial leave is based upon the merit of the work proposed, and departments should present (and may be called upon to substantiate) only meritorious cases. It is intended that all candidates have a reasonable expectation of a Sesquicentennial leave in the time frame requested.

Priority and timing are to be determined by the department and the candidates. Sesquicentennial leaves are internally funded, and other faculty or visitors must cover departmental (including school-wide) teaching responsibilities. The department's recommendation should address coverage of these responsibilities.

An appropriate committee appointed by the dean in consultation with the faculty will review the recommendations. The purpose of this review is to ensure that the departmental recommendations are indeed meritorious and that the plan for coverage is adequate. All recommendations of this committee will be subject to review and final approval by the dean.

attachment: Administrative Assumptions

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This policy was developed within the framework of the following assumptions, which were given to the Faculty Council by the Dean's office.

1. For the first three years, the Promotion and Tenure Committee (renamed as the Promotion, Tenure, and Sesquicentennial Leave Committee) will serve as the review committee. At the end of that three-year period, there will be an opportunity for further discussion and re-evaluation as to which committee should review Sesquicentennial leave requests.
2. It is not expected that departments will have exactly the same number of faculty on Sesquicentennial leave during all semesters or academic years. It is expected, however, that departments will develop their recommendations so that their requests over a 7 year cycle balance out.
3. Individuals should not expect to have a Sesquicentennial leave any more often than 1 in 7 years.
4. Departments will take primary responsibility for establishing priorities and making decisions about which people and research proposals to put forward.
5. Departments will be expected to justify their recommendations based on (a) the merit of the proposal in question and (b) the demonstrated productivity of the faculty member making the proposal.
6. Productivity is presumed to include teaching and administration as well as research and publication.
7. No additional resources will be provided for departments for faculty on sesquicentennial leave.
8. Ordinarily, Sesquicentennial leave applications will be received and reviewed in the fall semester prior to the academic year in which the leave would be taken (i.e., in the fall of 2000 for the academic year 2001-2002).