

Campus Practice on Exceeding Limits on Sabbatical Credits in Light of COVID-19 Pandemic **Issued and effective September 22, 2021**

Scope and Purpose

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many faculty members' sabbatical plans or ability to take sabbaticals have been adversely affected. Consequently, they may have reached the maximum limit on sabbatical credits. The purpose of this policy is to permit faculty to accrue credits beyond the maximum limit so not to be penalized by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Background

Section 740–16a of the Academic Personnel Manual (“APM”) limits the accrual of sabbatical credits to 20 credits (*i.e.*, 20 semesters of service). The campus may, however, allow for exceptions per APM 740–16a. Additionally, in spring 2020, faculty who were on sabbatical that spring semester were permitted to cancel their in-progress sabbatical and have the sabbatical credits being used for that sabbatical returned to them (https://apo.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/sabbatical_update_v2.pdf).

Provisions

The following rules are now in effect:

1. If, as of July 1, 2020, a faculty member had more than 16 accrued sabbatical credits (including any returned for a frustrated sabbatical in spring 2020), then that individual can accrue four more credits during academic years 2020–21 and 2021–22 even if that would take them beyond the 20-credit limit.
2. The campus is unlikely to be able to accommodate a flood of sabbatical requests for academic year 2022–23. Consequently, if, as permitted under APM 740–16b, a unit is unable to accommodate a request to take sabbatical in the 2022–23 academic year, then a faculty member so denied a sabbatical can accrue two additional credits for service in academic year 2022–23 even if those credits would take them beyond or further beyond the 20-credit limit. Note the accrual of two additional credits as stipulated in this clause is dependent on having applied and being turned down for a sabbatical.
3. Employing the same rationale given in #2, a faculty member with more than 18 accrued credits as of July 1, 2022, who applies and is turned down for a sabbatical in 2022–23, can accrue two additional sabbatical credits even if that would take them beyond the 20-credit limit.
4. The intended maximum number of credits that any faculty member could have on July 1, 2023 or after as a consequence of this policy is 26, which would be the situation if they had 20 credits as of July 1, 2020, were on duty in academic years 2020–21 and 2021–22, and were denied any sabbatical in academic year 2022–23 (and were on duty during that year).

Please note that, other than allowing faculty to accrue credits beyond the 20-credit limit, this document is not intended to nor does it modify or countermand any of the provisions of APM 740. Similarly, it is not intended to nor does it alter existing campus practice and policy with regard to sabbatical leaves. In particular, the provisions of APM 740–11 on the conditions under which one accrues sabbatical credits continue to hold.

Faculty, department chairs, and deans should, as always, be mindful that faculty do not have a right to take sabbatical whenever they wish. As stipulated in APM 740–16b, “A sabbatical leave shall be granted only at a time when it will not disrupt the teaching program or other vital operation of the University.”

Units are strongly encouraged, if they have not already done so, to have written guidelines on how requests to take sabbatical will be assessed and how the granting of sabbatical and other leaves rationed so as not to disrupt the unit's teaching mission and other vital operations. In light of the limits on the accruing of sabbatical credits, such guidelines should give priority to those faculty with the most credits *ceteris paribus*.