

## PROFESSIONAL LEAVES - THE EVERGREEN STATE COLLEGE

### I. Introduction

The Evergreen State College has a strong commitment to the teaching of undergraduate students. This commitment includes the exploration of new and innovative ways to make this teaching more effective and meaningful. Such a goal makes heavy demands on both the faculty and administrative personnel of the institution. The Faculty Handbook (p. 57) lists the considerations involved in determining the suitability of faculty for continued service. These include ability to teach through seminar leadership, ability to direct contracted studies and field programs, continued scholarly development, and administrative service to the institution and others. A recent memorandum from the Provost directs that as a matter of policy "...each faculty member will normally devote at least one-third of a three-year contract to an area(s) beyond his or her specialty...". The current policy of creating new Coordinated Studies programs and teams each year makes further demands on both faculty and administrators. Administrators generally have an increased responsibility and demand on their time because of the goals of the college. It is desirable that administrators at all levels be abreast of developments in their particular fields and that they have an awareness of what is going on in closely related fields. In addition, it is highly desirable that subordinates be given the opportunity to gain experience in positions of higher responsibility.

It is obvious that meeting or attempting to meet the requirements outlined above in the normal day-to-day pressure of work at the college is difficult. A program which would allow faculty and administrators to take time off from their normal duties to pursue development and improvement in the many ways expected of them would have obvious benefit to both the institution and the individual. Such a program would have as its main objective professional development of the individual and continued improvement in the educational services offered to the students. Specific objectives would include:

- a. allowing faculty and administrative personnel to update their knowledge in their professional fields and to advance their knowledge through research and study.
- b. allowing faculty and administrative personnel to develop skills and knowledge in areas other than their "own" professional area.
- c. allowing faculty and administrative personnel to increase competence in administrative, research, teaching and creative skills.
- d. allowing faculty and administrative personnel to acquire background, and information and materials for new teaching programs.

### II. Eligibility

- a. All teaching personnel (faculty) and exempt administrators and staff will be eligible for paid professional leave.
- b. Leave will be granted at the rate of one academic term (quarter) for each two academic years of service. An academic year consists of three teaching terms (quarters) within a twelve month period (the twelve month period

beginning with the start of fall term contractual period). Extra teaching within any one year does not qualify for extra leave time. For non-teaching staff, leave will be granted at the rate of three months for each two years of service, years being counted from the date of the initial contract.

- c. No more than 5% of faculty and 5% of exempt administrators and staff may be absent on professional leave at any one time.

- d. Applications

We expect that there will usually be more people wanting paid leave than there is money available. Eligible faculty should submit applications to a Professional Leaves DTF. Selection among applicants, if it is necessary, will be made by the Deans on advice of this DTF.

The purpose of paid leave is improvement of a faculty member's abilities as a teacher and scholar at Evergreen. The DTF should place highest priority on applications which promise the greatest improvement in the faculty member's abilities.

In teaching, areas of improvement might include developing curricular plans, counseling students, developing interdisciplinary competence, or working with seminar groups. In scholarship, leaves might be appropriate for renewing acquaintance with a specialized field, for full-time research or creative work, or for full-time work for government agencies or other bodies.

We feel that paid leaves should not usually be granted for a faculty member to do more of something he already is doing well. Instead, leaves should be used for filling gaps and strengthening weak points.

Evergreen's emphasis on interdisciplinary programs and close contact with students may make continuing scholarly authority the biggest problem for most faculty members, so that many leaves will be devoted to research or creative work. However, this is by no means the only legitimate activity for a paid leave; in some cases, it may not even be appropriate.

An application for paid leave should describe the proposed activity and should indicate the benefits that are expected, in the light of the faculty member's strengths and weaknesses. Supporting materials may well be of the sort that compose the portfolios--evaluations, personal productions, and so on. Application should be made before the beginning of winter quarter in the year preceding the academic year in which leave is wanted. This will help academic planning considerably.

We do not feel that paid leave should be used as a means of persuading individual faculty members to stay at Evergreen. Nor do we feel that study for a higher degree or the advancement of the college's or the individual's professional prestige (for example, through holding office in a national professional association) are adequate justification in themselves for getting paid leave.

### III. Application

- a. Applications from faculty for professional leave must be submitted by the end of the fall quarter of the academic year preceding the academic year in which leave is to be taken. For exempt administrators and staff, applications must be submitted six months prior to the new contractual year.

- b. Applications will be evaluated by a Professional Leaves Committee and recommendations made to the Provost. Evaluation will be based on criteria specified in Section II.d. above.
- c. The Professional Leaves Committee will be a standing committee with a rotating membership of faculty, exempt administrators, staff, and a student. Exact composition, terms of membership and operation to be specified.
- d. Application procedure and format to be specified.

IV. Compensation

- a. Compensation while on professional leave will be at the rate of two-thirds of the regular salary plus college contributions to medical insurance and retirement.
- b. Compensation will be the same regardless of whether one, two, or three terms leave is taken.
- c. If an individual obtains outside foundation grant or fellowship support, the college compensation will be reduced so that the total compensation is no higher than the individual's normal institutional salary.

V. Portfolio

Individuals on leave will be expected to document their activities by maintaining their portfolios in the same manner as while on regular employment with the college.

VI. Funding

- a. The cost of a professional leave program lies in the need to provide a means of handling the "teaching load" of the absent individual(s). For non-faculty personnel, a means must be found to discharge the responsibilities of the absent administrator or staff member.
  - 1. Faculty. The money saved on the individual's salary can be used to pay for at least partial replacements. The remaining "teaching load" is distributed among remaining faculty. It is possible at TESC to use both these methods to finance the program with no additional funds. If leaves are taken in the later terms of the academic year, student attrition could well bring about a situation where there would be no need for load "redistribution".

Example (2000 students, 100 faculty. 20:1 ratio)

- (a) With 5 faculty gone during the year, the ratio becomes 21.1:1.
  - (b) With 5 faculty gone, but 2 full-time replacements hired, the ratio becomes 20.6:1. With student attrition in the winter and spring terms, this could even out. (Would require drop of 60 students. In spring, 1973, attrition, both withdrawal and leave of absence, was about 150.)
- 2. Administrators and staff. The obviously best way to cover the individual's position would be to move a subordinate into the position for the period

of leave. This "upward moving" could continue down the line, giving a number of individuals a chance at higher responsibility and training. Some distribution of extra duty along the line might avoid any need to hire temporary help. On the other hand, it may be very desirable to do this, at least to the extent allowed by the available funds (from the salary of the individual on leave).

VII. Implementation

- a. Initial draft of plan to the Evergreen community for review and suggestions.
- b. Reconsideration of the plan by the DTF.
- c. Submission of the plan for review by the Attorney General and the Council on Higher Education.
- d. Presentation of the plan to the Board of Trustees for adoption as policy.
- e. Plan operational so that application for leave can be made in the fall term of the 1973-74 academic year and first leaves taken in the 1974-75 academic year.