

Format Guidelines and Evaluation Criteria for Sabbatical Proposals in NAU School of Forestry – Approved 14 March 2001

1. This policy specifies the format for sabbatical proposals, and criteria for evaluating them in the School of Forestry. This policy does not relieve the faculty member's obligation to follow requirements in the NAU Faculty Handbook (Section 7.8.1) regarding deadlines, one year of service after the sabbatical, a written report and public seminar, and other issues.
2. A Sabbatical Proposal must be a coherent goal-driven document with sections titled *Introduction, Rationale & Significance, Methods, Expected Results, Time Line, and Impact on Instruction/Mentoring*.
3. The *Rationale & Significance* section must explicitly address at least 2 of the 5 criteria listed in the NAU Faculty Handbook (7.8.1.6 a through e), and the School of Forestry mission and goals.
4. The proposal should also address 3 additional School of Forestry criteria of (a) feasibility of the project, (b) probability that the faculty member will successfully complete the project, and (c) contribution to the School and College.
5. The *Impact on Instruction/Mentoring* section must be a copy of a dated memo from the faculty member to the Chair, clearly listing:
 - (a) Classes for which a replacement instructor will be needed during the sabbatical period. The applicant is encouraged to include suggestions for covering these needs.
 - (b) Names of the graduate students of the faculty member. The applicant must explain how graduate students will be mentored during the sabbatical.
 - (c) Other important impacts on the School that may arise from the absence of the faculty member.

The applicant is encouraged to include suggestions for covering these needs. It is the responsibility of the Chair – not the applicant or the Faculty Status Committee (FSC) – to insure that staffing needs are met during the sabbatical.

1. The faculty member should be engaged in sabbatical activities for at least 17 weeks (1-semester sabbatical) or 34 weeks (2-semester sabbatical), during which the faculty member should not be distracted with NAU or School of Forestry activities. If the sabbatical plan includes or allows the faculty member to spend significant amount of time in or near Flagstaff, the applicant must explain how he or she will avoid routine work in their office.
2. The FSC will not consider the fiscal impact of the sabbatical on the School of Forestry.

Faculty submitting Sabbatical Proposals should be aware that the Faculty Status Committee must forward all proposals to the Chair, with a cover letter that evaluates each proposal as *acceptable* or *unacceptable* and ranks all of the acceptable proposals using the 3 School criteria listed above. Consistent with NAU Faculty Handbook, a sabbatical proposal can be related to teaching (7.8.1.6., criteria **a** & **c**), research (criteria **a**, **c**, & **d**), or service (criteria **e** & **c**), or a combination thereof. The following policies relate to these 3 types of sabbatical activities.

Proposals related to teaching:

- **New courses:** The faculty must clearly commit to create a specific course. The proposal should clearly state the intention of the faculty member to offer the new course as a regular course line (i.e., at least once every 2 years). The Sabbatical Proposal must explain how the

course will further the mission of the School, and should include an estimate of the demand for the course based on a survey or other empirical evidence. The proposal must include a memo from the Chair assessing the impact of the proposed course on faculty teaching load and the School's ability to deliver core courses.

- **Existing courses:** Revision of an existing course is not suitable as a sabbatical project, except when the Chair strongly supports a proposed major revision of a professional upper-division core course. In this case, the Chair's support letter must be appended to the Sabbatical Proposal.
- **Other activities to enhance teaching effectiveness:** A clear well-justified plan must be presented. For instance, if a faculty intends to take classes to improve their quantitative skills, the proposal should specify the particular classes to be taken, how these classes will enhance teaching effectiveness, how the material will fit into a particular course, and how the effort will advance the mission and goals of the School.

Proposals related to research:

- The faculty member must commit to carry out a certain project. The Sabbatical Proposal should include a plan for the contingency that anticipated additional funding does not materialize.
- A promise to write and submit a research proposal is not suitable as a sabbatical project.
- The research activity should demonstrate that the faculty member is taking the opportunity to significantly expand their research agenda to new questions, techniques, approaches, or systems. It should not be a continuation of existing local research projects.

Proposals related to service:

- The NAU Faculty Handbook specifies that the service must be "outstanding" and prohibits certain commercial activities as sabbatical projects.
- The School of Forestry requires a service-based sabbatical project to involve indisputably extraordinary service, such as service as editor-in-chief of a professional journal, writing a major book under contract to a publisher, or full-time service to a non-governmental organization in a field related to his or her profession.