

3.16 EDUCATIONAL LEAVE, EDUCATIONAL AID & CONTINUOUS LEARNING WAIVER

Faculty and Administrators

Educational Leave

Absences granted must be for a specific course of study related to the mission of the College. The period of absence will be regarded as active service for merit consideration. Neither sick nor annual leave will be earned during the period of the absence, but the period will be counted in determining the rate of annual leave accrual. Changes in salary scale of increase for merit may be affected during the period of absence. Employee contributions to the Virginia Supplemental Retirement System and Virginia Public Employees group life insurance will be based upon full-time salary and full credit will be allowed for the period of absence, provided at least half salary is paid. (Summer school aid for employees not regularly employed during the summer is not considered for either the retirement or the group life insurance).

Educational Leave Without Pay

Educational leave without pay may be granted at the discretion of the President for reasons such as but not limited to:

Professional development related to one's discipline or occupational field.

Educational leave in excess of such leave allowable with pay (not to exceed two years when combined with educational leave without pay).

Full-time study.

Foreign teaching assignments or exchange teaching.

A faculty member who is granted educational leave without pay shall receive any salary scales increases which occur during the period of the leave. A faculty member returning from educational leave without pay shall normally be reinstated to their former positions unless they sign an agreement releasing the College from this commitment or unless College organizational changes require the reassignment of faculty members.

Sabbatical Leave

Sabbatical leave for professional development may be made available to teaching faculty, administrative and professional faculty, and the College president. The objective of such leave is to provide activities which will improve teaching effectiveness, enhance creative and/or artistic activities, improve professional competency, and provide a renewed capacity for significant contribution of service to the College and the Community at large. Sabbatical leave is not designed for planned courses of study for academic credit.

Description and Purpose

A sabbatical is a compensated leave of absence of one or two semesters for full-time academic faculty and up to 12 months for administrative and professional faculty and the College president. Sabbatical shall be granted for approved projects of full-time independent study, research, and/or creative work which will renew teaching abilities, and to foster and

SVCC Faculty/Staff Handbook

enrich intellectual and professional growth and development. Projects may be concerned with wide-ranging interest or with work in specialized fields and should address issues in the substance of the applicant's teaching field, or in some other area which will enhance understanding or related fields. The ultimate purpose of the leave program is to sustain vigor, especially in the College's academic instructional programs, and to ensure that faculty members have the opportunity for professional development.

Eligibility

To be eligible for consideration, the faculty member must meet the following criteria:

Hold a full-time nine-month teaching faculty contract, a twelve-month teaching, professional, or administrative contract.

Have completed six years of creditable service at the time of application for sabbatical leave.

Have completed six years of creditable service since a previously awarded sabbatical leave.

That despite the applicant's meeting the above qualifications, his/her acceptance shall be further limited by the criteria enunciated in the College's Professional Development Plan.

Faculty members who are awarded sabbatical leave shall serve twice the time of approved leave with pay at the College after return from leave with pay. The number of sabbatical leave awards in any year will depend upon the availability of funds.

Application

Faculty members who wish to request a sabbatical leave must submit the request in writing to the President at least one year prior to the anticipated date of the sabbatical. The request should address (1) the dates of the requested sabbatical, (2) the purpose of the sabbatical, and (3) how the sabbatical will be beneficial to the professional development of the faculty member, to the College, and to the student body.

Monetary Compensation and Benefits

The rate of pay while on leave with pay will be no less than 50 percent of the (current) salary in effect on the last contractual workday prior to the effective date of sabbatical leave.

A written report summarizing project accomplishments must be submitted to appropriate College officials.

SVCC Faculty/Staff Handbook

The individual must execute a promissory note agreeing to repay the gross salary received while on leave if that individual does not return to the College which granted the leave with pay, or to another VCCS College, or to the System Office upon completion of the sabbatical leave. If the faculty member resigns prior to the completion of his or her obligation, the outstanding pro rata portion of the note shall be paid in full within one year following termination of employment. The individual who fails to complete successfully any portion of the sabbatical may be required by the president (or chancellor in the case of the president) to reimburse the College a proportional amount of the salary received while on leave.

Resident Study

The agency shall not pay more than half salary and registration, laboratory and tuition fees. Books and other study materials charged, or purchased, separately as the property of the employee are not to be included in the cost paid by the State. Payment for the expenses noted may be made directly to the institution or as reimbursement to the employee. No program of resident study which requires more than twelve months, in the aggregate, for completion may be initiated without prior justification to and approval by the Director of Personnel. The justification statement should describe the program generally, citing its anticipated length, the objective and its benefit for the agency.

The employee will execute a promissory note with 3% interest compounded annually for the amount of all salary and expenses paid by the State. The note and interest will be canceled in their entirety by the return of the employee to State service for a period equal to at least twice that of the period of absence; if the employee returns to State service for a lesser period, he must repay on a pro-rata basis the portion of the note and interest which has not been fulfilled by the employment.

The note will be executed at the date of the initial payment, with interest to accrue at the date study is terminated; the principal will be listed at the full estimated State expenditure, later to be adjusted to the amount actually paid by the State as of the termination of the study.

Educational Aid

Educational aid is contingent upon local and/or state appropriation of funds. Normally educational aid is awarded to enable qualified full-time faculty to attain advanced degrees from one of these six regionally accredited associations (see below) when such degrees are essential to maintenance of established standards of the institution or to enable faculty to undertake advanced degrees or study necessary to meet specific needs of the institution. **Six**

SVCC Faculty/Staff Handbook

associations – New England, North Central, Northwest, Middle States, Western and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

If the College requests that a faculty member obtain specific skills outside that individual's subject area, then the College will pay the full cost of tuition unless completing course deficiencies was a condition of employment.

If courses are taken for the individual's benefit, but were not requested by the College, then the College may pay up to \$ 500 per semester, not exceeding half of the actual cost of tuition, pending approval of the President's Staff. Books and other study materials charged or purchased separately are not covered. The College will reimburse its portion of no more than two doctoral dissertation classes. The College encourages faculty involvement in professional organizations and attendance at professional meetings or workshops. Money will be made available for meeting and workshop travel as the budget permits.

Original appointment faculty employees should normally complete one full semester of employment in order to be eligible for Educational Aid. This provision shall also apply to faculty employees re-employed within the VCCS after a break in service. Teaching faculty should normally be eligible for or have received a multi-year appointment in order to be eligible for Educational Aid which consists of educational expenses and educational leave with partial pay or educational expenses and educational leave without pay. Administrative faculty should normally have completed a minimum of three years of service in the VCCS in order to be eligible for Educational Aid which consists of educational expenses and educational leave with partial pay or educational expenses and educational leave without pay.

VCCS Professional Development Initiative

Professional development is defined as a comprehensive, systematic, and purposeful initiative designed to maintain professional competence, to serve career and personal needs, and to respond to institutional objectives while remaining attentive to faculty career stages. The responsibility for faculty professional development is shared by the individual, the College, and the Virginia Community College System. (See Professional Development Workshop Evaluation – Exhibit 42) The objective of the VCCS Professional Development Initiative is to support the commitment to quality education for Community College students in Virginia by investing in the professional development needs of the faculty that ably serve them. The term "faculty" is broadly defined to include teaching, professional, and administrative faculty.

SVCC Faculty/Staff Handbook

The VCCS Professional Development Initiative includes the following components:

- Minority Faculty Recruitment Project
- Faculty Exchange Program
- Teleconferences: Satellite Broadcast Support
- Faculty Professional Development Research Grants
- Peer Group Meetings.

SVCC's Professional Development in conjunction with the VCCS Professional Development Initiative provides for a comprehensive package of options and faculty and administrators are encouraged to participate in both. (See Recipient Evaluation Form – Exhibit 41)

Adjunct Faculty

Educational aid may also be awarded to adjunct faculty upon the recommendation of the appropriate Dean when additional courses are essential to maintenance of established standards of the College or to meet specific needs of the College. Educational aid for adjuncts will be awarded at the same level and following the same guidelines and limitations as aid awarded to full-time faculty.

Classified Staff

Educational Aid

Educational aid is contingent upon local and/or state appropriation of funds. Normally educational aid is given to classified employees for the following:

- Training of employees in the use of new or modified methods and equipment.
- Training employees in skills and knowledge required by changes in the employee's current position.
- Training of employees for advancement to positions for which qualified applicants are not otherwise available.
- Training of employees appointed with below-minimum qualifications because qualified applicants were not available.

In accordance with the state policy on educational aid, the President's Staff has made the following interpretations:

All educational aid requests (see Exhibit 43) must be submitted at the beginning of the semester with reimbursement to be made at the completion of the course and

SVCC Faculty/Staff Handbook

upon appropriate documentation of successful completion - i.e. official copy of the grade report (EXCEPTION: **). The College educational aid policy covers only tuition and release time when appropriate. It does not cover the cost of books.

A classified employee may take a class during working hours with pay if the following conditions are met:

The course or programs are work related.

The class does not exceed three credit hours per semester.

The employee has his/her supervisor's approval.

The employee puts job responsibilities first before classes during work time.

If the College requests that an employee take a class, tuition will be paid by the College and the employee will be given release time with pay.

*If the employee requests to take a work related course, the employee may pay the tuition; and the College, pending supervisor's approval, will give release time with pay

**The employee wishes to take a non-work related course during work hours, the employee may pay for the tuition and make the time up either before or after his/her normal work schedule. Time cannot be made up during breaks.

Part-time employees may be eligible for educational aid at the discretion of the President's Staff. Each request is considered on an individual basis and is dependent upon the availability of funds, the employee's length of service to the College, and the benefit to the College.

Full-time Classified staff wishing to take classes beyond the associate degree level are reimbursed at the rate of up to half the actual cost up to \$500 per semester.

The only time the College will pay tuition for a course before the course is taken rather than reimbursing an employee upon satisfactory completion of such a course is when the College sets up an in-house training course for employees and designates which students are authorized to charge. If the College does pay tuition beforehand and the employee does not complete the course, then the employee will be liable for payment of the course.

In cases when the employee is required to attend meetings and travel during non-

SVCC Faculty/Staff Handbook

routine work hours, no payment of overtime is authorized. Attendance is for the employee's benefit; therefore, the time involved should be treated as educational leave with no transaction required. (See Exhibit 27)

Continuous Learning Tuition Waiver. The VCCS has approved a tuition waiver policy for all full time employees, adjuncts and part time employees who work at least 20 hours per week. Wage employees whose primary status is as a student are not eligible. Courses included in this program must be for credit offered by SVCC and may be part of a degree program or just a class taken for professional development. Eligible employees may take up to six (6) credits a semester but can only take one three (3) credit class during working hours provided it is work related and has been approved in advance by their supervisor and the appropriate Vice President. If a class is not allowed to be counted towards work time, an employee may take leave time to take the class pending approval of their supervisor and the appropriate Vice President. A passing grade is not required for the tuition waiver but the employee is expected to attend the classes. In the case of a class which might be filled, paying students will take priority over those who have registered with a tuition waiver. The Continuous Learning Tuition Waiver form must be completed for payment. (See Exhibit 5)