

Policy Title: Staff Learning and Development Leave

Policy Summary: Provides for a Learning and Development Leave Program at Drake University

Policy Category: Human Resources

Policy Owner: Human Resources

Policy Summary

This policy provides for a Learning and Development Leave Program for staff at Drake University.

Purpose

Drake University's Learning and Development Leave Program provides an opportunity for paid time off for comprehensive learning and development activities that will contribute to the professional growth of staff, further Drake's mission, and/or further the continuous improvement initiatives within the staff member's unit.

Scope

The Drake University Learning and Development Leave Program provides non-bargaining full time 12-month staff an opportunity for paid time off for comprehensive learning activities. This policy may also apply to qualifying faculty who hold multi-year administrative positions (*e.g.*, Provost, Deputy Provost, Associate Provost, Dean, and Associate Dean).

Policy

Learning and Development Leave

The Drake University Learning and Development Leave Program is designed to provide opportunities for staff to have paid time off for comprehensive learning activities that will contribute to their growth, further Drake's mission, and/or further the continuous improvement initiatives within the staff member's unit.

Learning and development leave is not designed for the pursuit of academic degrees.

For information about how Drake may support pursuit of an academic degree, please visit the [Tuition Waiver Policy](#) and the [PhD Reimbursement Policy](#). For faculty leave information please see the [Faculty Sabbatical Leave Policy](#) set forth in the [Faculty Manual](#).

Some kinds of leave that have been contemplated or approved in the past pursuant to this policy have included:

- Completing a Higher Education Leadership certificate
- Completing a Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion certificate
- Completing a certified Student Affairs Educator certification (*e.g.*, NASPA)
- Becoming a certified Human Resources professional (*e.g.*, SHRM)

- Using leave to renew or advance professional certifications or licenses
- Completing Crucial Conversations training courses
- Using leave for a Fulbright scholarship or program
- Drake program, policy, or process development, tied to continuous improvement goals or initiatives
- Using time to focus on publications and complex grant proposals
- Self-study (combining a number of focused skills and topics related to the staff member's current or aspirational role at Drake)

Eligibility

All non-bargaining, full-time, 12-month staff (including faculty appointed to multi-year administrative positions) with at least six (6) years of continuous full-time employment, working twelve (12) months per year, are eligible to apply for Learning and Development Leave, subject to the approval and criteria below.

Length of Leave

Leave under this policy is available for extensive or in-depth learning above and beyond what is typically available through regular training programs or learning opportunities. Consequently, four (4) weeks is what is contemplated as an appropriate amount of leave time under this policy in most cases. However, the appropriate member of the President's Council may approve shorter leaves. In unusual circumstances, a learning and development leave opportunity may require longer leave periods, but such leaves can only be granted with the approval of the University President.

One four (4) week leave is available during any six (6) year period.

Compensation

Leave under this policy is paid at the individual's full salary. Employees who participate in Drake's employee benefits will maintain benefits eligibility while participating in leave under this policy. While on leave, sick leave will continue to accrue at its regular rate.

During approved learning and development leave, participants remain eligible for normal salary adjustments.

Learning and development leave cannot be used for other employment, including work as a consultant or contractor. However, external funding for research (e.g., grants) and special projects are not prohibited so long as such funding is consistent with the proposed plan and the overall purposes of the approved learning and development leave.

Post-Leave Knowledge Share

Upon return from approved learning and development leave, the findings, results, or reflections from the leave experience are to be shared. The staff member who is returning from leave may work with their manager and Human Resources to determine the most appropriate way to

achieve maximum benefit for the institution and employee as a result of the dissemination process.

Knowledge sharing events may include but are not limited to:

- Publishing an article in OnCampus
- Sharing a report with relevant stakeholders
- Delivering a presentation to the staff member's department/unit or other appropriate audience
- Leading a BUILD session open to all Drake employees
- Implementing a project or initiative (e.g., development of a program, policy, or process)
- Delivering a report to senior administrators, the Board of Trustees, or other appropriate groups.

Committed Service Upon Return

Upon return from approved learning and development leave, the individual agrees to remain employed with Drake University for at least one (1) year from the first day of leave.

If the employee does not return for the requisite time period, they must refund the University any net income received during the leave period and any leave expenses paid by the University, if applicable.

Application

Eligible staff must submit a [Learning and Development Leave Application](#) to their manager. Generally, eligible employees must submit a Learning and Development Leave Application to their manager at least three (3) months prior to the leave's commencement. Exceptions may be made at the discretion of the manager.

The staff member's immediate manager and department head or applicable senior administrator will determine whether to recommend approval of the leave to the appropriate member of the President's Council.

Managers and the approving member of the President's Council may determine whether to grant or deny the application taking into account operational and staffing needs, the length of the requested leave, prior leave opportunities, individual performance, and other factors appropriate to determining whether the leave is mutually beneficial to the University and applicant. Managers may suggest modifications to the requested leave or timing, if appropriate.

To access the [Learning and Development Leave Application](#), visit the Forms Library.

Last Review Date: March 2023

Effective Date: August 2016

Resources and Related University Policies:

- [Learning and Development Leave Application](#)
- [Tuition Waiver Policy](#)
- [PhD Reimbursement Policy](#)
- [Faculty Manual](#)
- [Faculty Sabbatical Leave Policy](#)