Calvin College  
Faculty Development Committee  
Sabbatical and CRF Review Process

First Round Review

Assignment of Reviews

Each application will be reviewed by precisely four reviewers. Three will be assigned by the FDC chair, one will be the Dean for Research & Scholarship. The FDC will assign reviewers to best match their expertise with the topic of the applications they are reviewing. Reviews will be assigned so that each FDC member has approximately the same number of reviews. The FDC chair will not assign a reviewer to review an application from their own department to avoid a perceived conflict of interest. The chair will ask reviewers to self-declare any other conflicts of interest and reassign the reviewer if any arise.

All sabbatical applications will be reviewed first, distributed across all members of the FDC. All CRF applications will be reviewed second, distributed across all members of the FDC.

Reviewer Instructions

Please look over your assigned sabbatical or CRF applications and let the FDC chair know if you have any conflicts of interest with any of the assigned reviews, such as an application from a relative, a co-researcher, or close friend. The chair will then assign that application to a different reviewer.

For each application, you should assign it one of three groups: top, middle, or bottom. You must assign an equal number of applications to each group. If the number of applications you are reviewing is not divisible by three, you should assign the extras to the higher group. For example, if you have 12 applications, then you would assign 4 to each group; for 13 applications, assign 5 to top, 4 to middle, 4 to bottom; for 14 applications, assign 5 to top, 5 to middle, 4 to bottom.

Please take notes on each application you review so that you are prepared to discuss them with the rest of the committee and justify the score you assigned.

When considering the applications, please use the stated criteria from the faculty handbook.

For sabbaticals, handbook section 5.3 states:

• A sabbatical leave shall not be granted for extended travel or vacation or as a reward for years of service, but rather in anticipation of increased effectiveness of a staff member in his or her teaching or administrative career.
• it should be creative and/or scholarly
• it should be beneficial to the public, the college, and the professional growth of the grantee
• it should be of sufficient size and worth to merit a full semester’s work
• Sabbatical projects that focus on pedagogy can be approved only if the proposals fulfill all of these general requirements for sabbaticals
• A sabbatical leave shall be granted primarily based on an evaluation of the worthwhileness of the project to be undertaken
• A secondary consideration will be the applicant’s number of years in service without a leave
• A successful applicant must give evidence of having done preliminary research or of having engaged in scholarly or professional activity related directly to preparation for the projected leave of absence
• Every faculty member who plans to apply for a sabbatical leave should consult with the department chair early in the planning process in order to ensure that the application aligns with departmental needs and expectations.

For CRFs, handbook section 5.4 states:

• To qualify as “independent” research or scholarship, scholarly endeavors must not be with a normal part of a faculty member’s assigned teaching responsibilities.
• Fellowships shall be awarded only to faculty members with a record of solid scholarly or artistic achievement (or unusual promise of it) who have a scholarly or artistic project of merit or who continue to have ongoing research projects.
• Ordinarily, a CRF will not be awarded to any faculty member for more than three consecutive years. Though the quality of the proposal remains the most important factor in the decision, in the case where applicants are regarded as equal in quality, applicants who have not received recent CRF support will be given preference.

**Sorting of First Round Results**

Any applications that receive unanimous reviews of top will be set aside for funding. Any applications that receive unanimous reviews of bottom will be set aside as not competitive—to be reconsidered only if funds remain after the main round of evaluation.

The FDC will then meet to discuss each of the applications that received mixed reviews or reviews of middle, focusing first on those that received three scores of top or three scores of bottom. If the fourth reviewer changes their mind based on the discussion, then those applications can also be set aside. All other applications will then go into a second round of review, where the remaining three FDC members review the application.

**Second Round Review**

The FDC chair will collect rankings (top-middle-bottom) from all reviewers and consolidate into a single list. Except for the applications already set aside in the first round and cases of conflict of interest, each proposal should now have a “top-middle-bottom” ranking from
every committee member. The FDC chair will also obtain a spreadsheet from the office of the Dean of Research & Scholarship that indicates costs of sabbatical and CRF leaves for each applicant. The committee will then meet to discuss all proposals, paying special attention to proposals that are just above the cut-off line for funding or below it. The chair will use the cost spreadsheet to inform the committee’s work in order to stay within the established budget.

The committee will provide the Dean for Research & Scholarship with specific notes and feedback for any applicant not receiving an award. Once the Professional Status Committee (PSC) makes final decisions regarding the FDC recommendations, the Dean for Research & Scholarship will inform applicants of those decisions.

**Conflict of Interest Policy**

The FDC chair shall avoid assigning a review to a committee member from the same department as the proposer. Committee members shall inform the chair of any other conflicts of interest (such as a proposal from a research partner, co-author, family member, etc.).

If an FDC committee member themselves is submitting a proposal for sabbatical or CRF, then the chair will ensure they do not review their own proposal nor discuss the ranking of their proposal. Meetings to review applications will first focus on all the proposals except those from committee members and the full committee will establish a rank-ordering. Then the chair will ask the members with a proposal to leave the meeting and the remaining members will decide on the final rankings, including the absent committee member’s proposal.