

2025-2026 Interdisciplinary Research Sabbaticals – Guidelines

Goal: The goal of the interdisciplinary research sabbatical program is to create productive interdisciplinary research collaborations between a faculty member's home department and other academic units. The program supports a full year sabbatical at 100% pay (for fall and spring semesters) for a faculty member to be hosted by and resident in another academic unit for the entire sabbatical academic year. For the second semester of the full academic year sabbatical, the academic unit can be located at (A) Northeastern's Boston area campuses (i.e., Boston, Burlington, and Nahant) or (B) one of the network campuses (i.e., Arlington, Charlotte, London, Miami, Oakland, Portland, Seattle, Silicon Valley, Toronto, or Vancouver) to conduct research.

Eligibility: ONLY tenured professors who received January 15, 2025 approval letters for a one-semester sabbatical during the 2025-2026 academic year are eligible to apply for this extended interdisciplinary research sabbatical to occur during the fall and spring of the 2025-2026 academic year. Please note that the terms and conditions of an applicant's approved one-semester sabbatical will remain unchanged in the event of an unsuccessful interdisciplinary research sabbatical application.

Submission requirements (no longer than 5 to 8 pages in total, please):

- 1) A detailed plan from the applicant of the activities planned to start collaborations between the applicant's department and the host department or host campus, including any groundwork already initiated.
- 2) A letter of support jointly signed from the host department chair and host Boston-based dean or network campus dean (when applicable) explaining why this is a potentially fruitful endeavor from the host department's or host campus' perspective.
- 3) A letter of support jointly signed by both the department chair and the dean of the applicant's home department/college, explaining how the proposed activities will benefit the applicant's home department/college. For jointly appointed faculty, all unit heads and deans must approve the activity plan. Only proposals that are submitted with dean's signatures will be considered for funding.
- 4) A detailed budget that includes expenses and funding sources to afford travel, lodging, supplies, etc. (not salary, which is covered). Expenses must be approved by home unit head following the sabbatical budget guidelines (below).

Expectations:

There are two ways to apply for the interdisciplinary research sabbatical:

- (A) For proposals applicable to a Boston-area campus, the faculty member will spend the entire sabbatical academic year (fall and spring semesters) at the host department and be physically located in the host department when not traveling. The faculty member will agree to allow his or her home college to use his or her office space as needed. The faculty member will start a cross-disciplinary research project and, if appropriate to the field, will have applied for federal or industry funding by the conclusion of the sabbatical. The faculty member will create and conduct a cross-disciplinary research program between the two units.

Potential activities include but are not restricted to:

- 1) Running a research seminar series at the host department with speakers from the faculty member's home department.
 - 2) Generating research collaborations among faculty in the host department and the applicant's home department.
 - 3) Joining research meetings in the host department and giving a short presentation on the host department's research in the home department.
 - 4) Developing a course related to the faculty member's research that could be co-taught between the units or running a tutorial in the faculty member's research area customized to the host department's needs.
- (B) For proposals to spend the second semester of the interdisciplinary research sabbatical at one of the network campuses, the faculty is expected to adhere to the same expectations described in (A), although reasonable modifications can be considered accordingly. The key emphasis on interdisciplinary research should remain unchanged. The faculty should highlight in the proposal the unique strengths of the targeted network campus that are conducive to conducting interdisciplinary research and fostering partnerships with local research institutions and/or industries. Reminder: a letter from the network campus dean should be included as part of the submission package. For those considering collaborations at the London campus, note that a campus visitor form will be required. Contact your associate dean for faculty to obtain the "NU London Visiting Faculty Information Sheet."

Final Report: For approved interdisciplinary research proposals under both (A) and (B) categories, the faculty member will submit a written report at the end of the sabbatical period describing what cross-disciplinary collaborations have been fostered. The report should offer a clear plan for continuing to foster collaboration after the faculty member returns to her or his home department. The report should be distributed to chairs of the home and host departments, to the deans of the home and host colleges (including the dean of the network campus, when applicable) and to the Provost's Office by October 15 of the returning academic year.

Completed Applications are due in the Provost's Office (via email to Jackie Isaacs, j.isaacs@northeastern.edu) by **February 28, 2025**.

Information for Deans: Faculty who are approved for the second semester of interdisciplinary research sabbatical will receive 100% of their salary. The financial cost of replacement teaching during that semester is shared equally among the home college (1/3), the host college (1/3), and the Office of the Provost (1/3). The cost of replacement teaching is determined by the home college dean as the dollar amount that is paid to part-time lecturers to cover the teaching for the second semester the faculty member is away.

GUIDELINES FOR INTERDISCIPLINARY SABBATICAL TRAVEL & EXPENSES

Overview

During a sabbatical, faculty may incur expenses e.g., travel or living expenses, that are necessary and directly related to the leave. When expenses are anticipated, the faculty member shall provide a detailed budget (*template below*) as part of the sabbatical proposal. The faculty member shall also identify the source of funding for incurred expenses in the budget.

Review & Approval Process

When the dean's office receives the interdisciplinary sabbatical proposal from a faculty member, the dean shall forward the detailed budget to the Associate Dean for Administration and Finance (ADAF). The ADAF will review the budget for reasonableness and verify that expenses adhere to the guidelines outlined below and that there are sufficient funds available. If the budget requires any revisions to comply with the guidelines outlined here, the ADAF will consult with the dean and/or faculty member and request an updated budget. The final budget will be shared with the department chair or equivalent. In some cases, a final budget may not be available for the sabbatical proposal review. In the proposal, faculty should acknowledge the guidelines below and indicate that they will follow them. If there are any changes to the budget either before or during an approved sabbatical leave, then faculty should submit a revised budget to their unit head and dean's office as soon as possible.

During and After Sabbatical: The department chair or equivalent shall reference the final budget as they review and approve expenses in the Concur system. The faculty member is responsible to consult with the department chair and ADAF if substantial changes in the final budget arise, preferably prior to any spending.

Please note that per the Faculty Handbook sabbatical module, "a faculty member cannot be compensated for more than 100% of their academic year salary when taking a two-semester sabbatical leave without prior approval from the Provost."

Guidelines

- Travel and other expenses are reimbursable if the expenses are directly related to the sabbatical and if travel is required to fulfill the purpose of the sabbatical.

Explanation for Allowable and Unallowable Travel & Expenses

- *Lodging* –Lodging is allowable if travel is required to fulfill the purpose of the sabbatical. For long term lodging, a market value comparison for the proposed accommodations should be available upon request. A faculty member cannot request reimbursement if they own or have a financial interest in the lodging accommodations (e.g., vacation home, rental property).
- *Transportation to/from site* – The cost of traveling to and from the sabbatical site is allowable when travel arrangements are deemed reasonable.
- *Meals* – Food including groceries and daily meals are not eligible for reimbursement. Business meals are allowable if directly related to the purpose of the sabbatical leave or university business.

- *Other Travel* – Short term trips for research, conferences or meetings during the sabbatical are allowable when travel arrangements are deemed reasonable.
 - *Supplies* – Supplies are allowable when directly related to the purpose of the sabbatical leave.
- If the sabbatical is funded by sponsored research, travel and expenses must adhere to federal regulations ([Uniform Guidance](#)) and the award’s terms and conditions. The sponsor may override NU guidelines if specified in the award.
 - Faculty cannot request reimbursement for travel and expenses covered by another institution or organization.
 - Travel and expenses incurred while on sabbatical must follow all university policies including the [Policy on Travel & Expense Reimbursement](#), [Policy on Professional Standards and Business Conduct](#) and [Policy on Use of University funds](#).
 - Faculty are encouraged to use a NUCard (procard) while on sabbatical in place of incurring expenses on a personal credit card.
 - The Office of the Provost has no additional funding to support travel activities or expenses.

If faculty modify their research plan during a sabbatical, they must contact their research administrator for guidance on sponsor prior approval requirements regarding their effort (for more information, please see the [Policy on Effort Reporting](#)). If the effort on the project and role does not change, s/he will not normally need to notify the sponsor.

Budget Template

Sabbatical Research Expenses			
	Description of Expense	Cost	Index
Travel (To & From)			
Lodging			
Supplies			
Other Expenses			
Total Costs			