



OFFICE OF THE SENATE

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TO: Kelli Trei, Chair
Senate Committee on University Statutes and Senate Procedures

FROM: Joanne Kaczmarek, Chair
Senate Committee on General University Policy

DATE: October 9, 2026

SUBJECT: GP.26.02, Proposed Revision to the *Statutes*, Article IX, Section 7a – Sabbatical Leaves and Unpaid Leaves of Absence for Members of the Faculty (ST-90)

BACKGROUND

On August 27, 2025, David Dalpiaz, Chair, Senate Committee on University Statutes and Senate Procedures (SP), sent Chair Kaczmarek, Senate Committee on General University Policy (GP), a request to review ST-90 and ST-91, also known as (SP.26.01) and (SP.26.02), both originating from UIC and transmitted via USC.

For ST-90, which proposes extending sabbatical rights to many non-tenure system (specialized) faculty, GP was asked specifically to provide comments on the following:

1. The size of the impact (number of faculty newly eligible for sabbatical)
2. Any potential impact on Provost Communications
3. Potential impact to teaching (given the potential reduction in capacity with more faculty on sabbaticals) and any related governance issues.

Below are GP's comments addressing each of these bulleted items followed by General Comments and two appendices that provide more detail.

1. The size of the impact (number of faculty newly eligible for sabbatical).

In Fall 2025, GP reached out to Bill Bernhard, Executive Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, to ask for information that would help us ascertain the size of the impact if specialized faculty were granted similar sabbatical rights as are granted to tenure stream faculty. Bernhard shared that data along with Jessica Mette, Assistant Provost for Faculty Appointments and Policy

Administration, in March 2026. The presentation, titled “Extending Sabbatical Leaves to Specialized Faculty” provided background information, Big Ten Benchmarking information, a summary of the sabbatical process, and data regarding the current usage of sabbatical by tenure system faculty. Based on the analysis conducted by the Office of the Provost, two models were also presented to convey impact. Model 1 (more inclusive) indicated ~70 specialized faculty may be on sabbatical per year or 35 each semester. Model 2 (less inclusive) indicated ~20 specialized faculty may be on sabbatical per year or 10 each semester. The presentation provided a table showing approximate costs per college if ~10% of the eligible specialized faculty taking sabbatical. *See Appendix 1.*

GP also received helpful information from Deb Stone, Assistant Chancellor for HR Centers of Expertise, who shared data generated from the Division of Management Information (DMI). The data reflect trends over a ten-year period of “Tenure System & Specialized Faculty as a % of Total Faculty by AY” and “Faculty Headcount by AY Specialized Faculty & Tenure System”. Stone noted that the 2025-26 numbers at the time the information was shared were provisional but expected to be close to the final numbers for the 2025-26 academic year. *See Appendix 2.*

2. Any potential impact on Provost Communications.

As GP Chair, I reached out directly to Bill Bernhard and inquired about the potential for any impact ST-90 would have on Provost Communications. Bernhard indicated there would be minimal impact on Provost Communications.

3. Potential impact to teaching (given the potential reduction in capacity with more faculty on sabbaticals) and any related governance issues

For our University, the majority of our non-tenure track faculty are focused on teaching. This is important for a number of reasons. For many units, if not most, offering a full semester’s leave to specialized faculty whose main/exclusive duties involve teaching, could have a significant impact on the teaching mission of the department if their positions are not temporarily filled. Based on the Teaching Patterns of 2024-25 (provided by Mette’s presentation), “Overall, specialized faculty teach fewer classes but larger enrollment classes. Therefore, a relatively larger impact [of providing a leave to specialized faculty] on IU generation.” This means that, in general, when specialized faculty are not available to teach and their classes are not filled with replacement instructors, the loss of Instructional Units is even greater than when a tenure track faculty is not available to teach. Specifically, if on average 10% of newly eligible specialized faculty members were to take a leave every six years without backup, the loss of enrollment would total 6,697 students. Comparing that to a scenario where 50% of all those eligible take a leave every six years without backup, the loss of enrollment would increase to 33,483 students *See Appendix 1.*

The impact on students of the potential loss of class sections and student seats should be a priority consideration when extending the opportunity for leaves to specialized faculty. Because courses that are required as pre-requisites for more advanced courses are often taught by

specialized faculty members, some students may find it more challenging to take the prerequisite courses if there are no replacement instructors for sections assigned to those on sabbatical. In combination with the decrease in IU's offered if units reduce their course offerings because they do not have the human and financial resources to hire replacement instructors, this may impact a student's ability to fulfill all program requirements and graduate on time.

Because sabbaticals are not centrally funded, units must cover the cost of relieving an instructor from their regular duties for a semester (or more). Some units with more available funds might be able to cover the additional costs of sabbaticals for specialized faculty but many, if not most, would likely struggle to support these costs, knowing some units already struggle to cover the additional costs of sabbaticals for tenure track faculty. Unless there is a means of having central campus funding support the additional costs, there will be a clear disadvantage faced by those units with more limited unit-level funding.

While it is true that units would not be *required* to approve applications for sabbaticals, the assumption one would hope for is that some applications from specialized faculty would in fact be approved. If this proposed revision to the *Statutes* goes forward, there is a reasonable chance that some units may begin approving less requests for sabbaticals due to the additional budgetary burdens they would now incur.

General Comments

The General University Policy Committee does not support the Proposed Revision to the *Statutes*, Article IX, Section 7a – Sabbatical Leaves and Unpaid Leaves of Absence for Members of the Faculty (ST-90) as presented to the committee in fall 2025. The proposal as presented is not acceptable:

a) No Rationale

The background statement of the revision gives no rationale for why faculty members who are not in a tenure-track position should be eligible for sabbatical support. The statement opens with the observation that the numbers and proportion of NTTs have increased, but an increase in numbers is not a self-evident rationale.

b) Inaccurate Statement

Presently, the proposal's background statement inaccurately claims: "there is no statutory connection between sabbatical leaves with pay and tenure status." The section of the *Statutes* under review with this proposed revision specifically refers to members of the faculty (line 7), and Article II of the current *Statutes* defines faculty as *only* those on the tenure track. Further, lines 7-12 of the proposed revision explicitly provide that the only faculty who may be granted a sabbatical are those in the tenure track. Until the *Statutes* are modified otherwise, the connection between sabbatical leaves with pay and tenure status is

clear. Two earlier proposals to revise the *Statutes* (ST-83 and ST-91) would explicitly include specialized faculty members within the definition of "faculty," but both are still under review. ST-90 proposes to amend the current *Statutes*, not a hypothetical future version of them.

c) Guidance about sabbatical activities

The proposal's background section gives no guidance about the sorts of sabbatical activities that would be appropriate for teaching-focused faculty members. Faculty whose duties involve research typically take this time to engage in study and research, or other research-related pursuits, such as outreach-focused travel. It is intuitive that faculty whose duties involve research would take this time to engage in study and research, or possibly other pursuits, such as outreach-focused travel. But teaching-focused faculty would not be teaching during their sabbatical; they would be released from those duties, by definition.

The current *Statutes* do not limit the reasons for sabbatical leaves to research; leave may be granted "for the purpose of study, research, or other pursuit, the object of which is to increase the faculty member's usefulness to the system." The key phrase, then, is "to increase the faculty member's usefulness to the system." The proposal provided no examples for ways a teaching-centered faculty member might increase their usefulness to the system by being relieved of all teaching for a semester.

Regarding the substance of the proposal, we note that there are already mechanisms in place on our campus for units to provide specialized faculty members with paid release from teaching duties to advance their professional expertise, and that there is precedent for doing so. Guidance to units about these professional development opportunities is provided in [Provost's Communication 25, section 8](#).

Extending Sabbatical Leaves to Specialized Faculty

Draft Shared with GP 3/24/26

Bill Bernhard
Jessica Mette
Xiaobei Chen

Origin of Proposal

- UIC Senate passed edit to *Statutes* in March 2024 to include professorial titles modified by teaching, research, or clinical, and titles of instructor or lecturer with or without the senior modifier (also included would be principal modifier).
- USC sent forward to Urbana Senate as ST-90; currently under consideration as SP26.01.
- Specialized faculty not impacted: adjunct or visiting modified, postdoctoral research associates, teaching associates, <1 FTE

Big Ten Benchmarking

- Explicit NTT Sabbaticals or Equivalent (7)
 - Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, Rutgers, UCLA, Oregon, Washington
- Unit-level NTT Sabbaticals or Equivalent (3)
 - Indiana, Northwestern, USC
- No NTT Sabbatical (8)
 - Illinois, Maryland, Michigan, Michigan State, Ohio State, Penn State, Purdue, Wisconsin

University Statutes on Purpose of Sabbatical

The University of Illinois Statutes, at Article IX, Section 7, provide that a member of the faculty who has the tenure system title/rank of professor, associate professor, or assistant professor ". . . may be granted a sabbatical leave of absence with pay for the purpose of study, research, or other pursuit, the object of which is to increase the faculty member's usefulness to the University." (Section 7.a.)¹ "Leaves of absence . . . are given to members of the faculty primarily for the purpose of enabling them to acquire additional knowledge and competency in their respective fields." (Section 7.e.)

Sabbatical Process

- Eligibility
 - Tenured faculty only (Associate, Full), as narrowed from *Statutes* in Provost's Communication 19
 - Service Credit
 - After eight appointment years of full-time service:
 - two semesters at two-thirds salary
 - one semester at full salary
 - After six appointment years of full-time service:
 - two semesters at one-half salary
 - one semester at full salary
- Approval process
 - UEO, College, Provost, Exec Vice President, BOT
- Reporting Process
 - Impact of Sabbaticals
- Audited each year through state compliance audit, BOT

Tenure Track Facts and Figures

- Usage
 - ~1450 as associate or full professor, eligible for sabbatical
 - ~240 tenured faculty could take each sixth year
 - Assuming all 1 FTE, 6 years to be eligible; (total number of tenured faculty/6)
 - ~60-65% of those eligible take sabbatical (2024-25: 159; 2025-2026: 145)
 - That is, ~10% of ALL tenured faculty take sabbatical each year
- Why don't all tenured faculty take sabbatical?
 - Other ways for tenured faculty to get teaching release
 - Dedicated to teaching
 - Access to labs and lab groups
 - Prefer routine

Modeling Assumptions and Consideration

- Total number of specialized faculty
- Eligibility requirements by FTE, rank
 - All specialized faculty OR
 - Only Modified Professorial Track at Assoc/Full rank
- Eligibility by service time
 - Six years. Other possibilities?
- Duration of Sabbatical
 - 1 semester
- Usage rate
 - Steady state: At what rate will specialized faculty take sabbaticals?
 - Transition
 - In first year of eligibility, many specialized faculty will meet eligibility requirements.

NTT Faculty Facts and Figures

- Model 1: Instructors/Sr/Princ, Lecturers/Sr/Princ, Asst/Assoc/Full Clinical/Research/Teaching Professors
 - 412 = total headcount of 1 FTE and six years of service in these titles
 - If each of those eligible take one semester full pay sabbatical every six years, roughly 70 specialized faculty may be on sabbatical a year, or 35 each semester
- Model 2: Only Assoc/Full Clinical/Research/Teaching Professors
 - 136 = total headcount of 1 FTE and six years of service
 - If each of those eligible to take one semester full pay sabbatical every six years, roughly 20 of these select specialized faculty may be on sabbatical a year, or 10 a semester

Estimating Number of Sabbaticals

TOTAL Faculty in Rank

	Current TT	NTT, if ST-90	Assoc/Full Clin/Res/Tch profs
Eligible title, 6 years	1450	412	136
If take once each 6 th year, those on sabbatical each year	242	69	23
Percent eligible for sabbatical each year at some point	17%	17%	17%
Actual use for TT is 60-65% of eligible, percent actualized annually	10%	10%	11%
If assume most take one semester full pay, /2 for percent on sabbatical any semester	5%	5%	5-6%

Modeling

Compare number of courses taught, enrollment impact, IUs generated

Different eligibility requirements

Different usage rates

Calculate cost of fewer IUs, classes taught

a. If colleges did not replace those classes, what is impact to blue box (i.e., lost revenue) based on IU rate?

b. If colleges hired a replacement to keep IUs available, what is expense?

Data from 2024-25

Teaching Patterns 2024-25

	Instructional Units	Course Sections	Students Taught
Tenure Track	613,892	13,281	202,504
Specialized	613,116	8,442	242,804
Total	1,227,008	21,723	445,308

Overall, specialized faculty teach fewer classes but larger enrollment classes. Therefore, a relatively larger impact on IU generation.

Impact of NTT Sabbaticals

As expanded in ST-90, one semester sabbatical every six years once eligible

		Annual Impact on		
	Annual Usage Rate As % of TOTAL	IUs	Enrollment (Seats)	Course Sections
Expanded titles in ST-90	10%	-16,267	-6,697	-236
	50%	-81,335	-33,483	-1,178
	100%	-162,675	-66,966	-2,356
Modified professorial titles at associate and full*	10%	-5,368	-2,210	-78
	50%	-26,841	-11,045	-389
	100%	-53,683	-22,099	-777
*Associate or full clinical/teaching/research professor titles are roughly 33% of ST-90 titles eligible today				

Cost of NTT Sabbaticals

Expansion as in ST-90; lost revenue if IUs Not Replaced: IU price is ~\$200

Financial Impact by Cost per Undergraduate IU (IVCB)

Undergraduate IU Rate in IVCB \$200.34

PAYING_COLLEGE	Annual Undergraduate IUs by Eligible Specialized Faculty	Annual Graduate IUs by Eligible Specialized Faculty	Annual Total IUs by Eligible Specialized Faculty	Annual IVCB Impact - Undergraduate IUs	IVCB Impact - Undergraduate IUs if all eligible take 1 semester	IVCB Impact - Undergraduate IUs w. 10% Eligible Specialized Faculty Taking Sabbatical
KL - Agr, Consumer & Env Sciences	27,231	1,158	28,389	5,455,516	2,727,758	272,776
KM - Gies College of Business	28,653	39,654	68,307	5,740,401	2,870,201	287,020
KN - Education	4,679	794	5,473	937,477	468,739	46,874
KP - Grainger Engineering	52,824	8,627	61,451	10,582,752	5,291,376	529,138
KR - Fine & Applied Arts	12,476	1,671	14,148	2,499,539	1,249,770	124,977
KT - College of Media	9,673	278	9,951	1,937,882	968,941	96,894
KU - Law	962	2,942	3,904	192,748	96,374	9,637
KV - Liberal Arts & Sciences	97,210	7,483	104,693	19,475,265	9,737,632	973,763
KY - Applied Health Sciences	7,514	973	8,488	1,505,445	752,723	75,272
LC - Veterinary Medicine	3	9,672	9,676	661	331	33
LG - School of Labor & Empl. Rel.	393	3	396	78,734	39,367	3,937
LL - School of Social Work	2,235	1,559	3,794	447,703	223,851	22,385
LP - School of Information Sciences	3,170	3,025	6,195	635,162	317,581	31,758
LT - Carle Illinois Medicine	42	420	462	8,414	4,207	421
NP - OVCRI Institutes	25	0	25	5,009	2,504	250
Grand Total	247,092	78,258	325,350	49,502,709	24,751,355	2,475,135

Cost of NTT Sabbaticals

Expansion as in ST-90; hire replacement @\$4,000 per lost credit hour

Financial Impact by Cost per Credit

Cost Per Credit \$4,000

PAYING COLLEGE	Annual Total Credit Hours by Eligible Specialized Faculty	Annual Total Financial Impact by Cost per Credit Hour	Financial Impact if all eligible take 1 semester	Financial Impact of 10% Eligible Specialized Faculty Taking Sabbatical
KL - Agr, Consumer & Env Sciences	312	1,248,667	624,333	62,433
KM - Gies College of Business	320	1,279,333	639,667	63,967
KN - Education	125	501,333	250,667	25,067
KP - Grainger Engineering	439	1,757,533	878,767	87,877
KR - Fine & Applied Arts	631	2,523,197	1,261,598	126,160
KT - College of Media	121	484,000	242,000	24,200
KU - Law	59	236,000	118,000	11,800
KV - Liberal Arts & Sciences	961	3,842,333	1,921,167	192,117
KY - Applied Health Sciences	97	388,000	194,000	19,400
LC - Veterinary Medicine	29	117,976	58,988	5,899
LG - School of Labor & Empl. Rel.	3	12,000	6,000	600
LL - School of Social Work	55	218,667	109,333	10,933
LP - School of Information Sciences	78	312,000	156,000	15,600
LT - Carte Illinois Medicine	8	33,333	16,667	1,667
NP - OVCRI Institutes	1	2,667	1,333	133
Grand Total	3,239	12,957,039	6,478,520	647,852

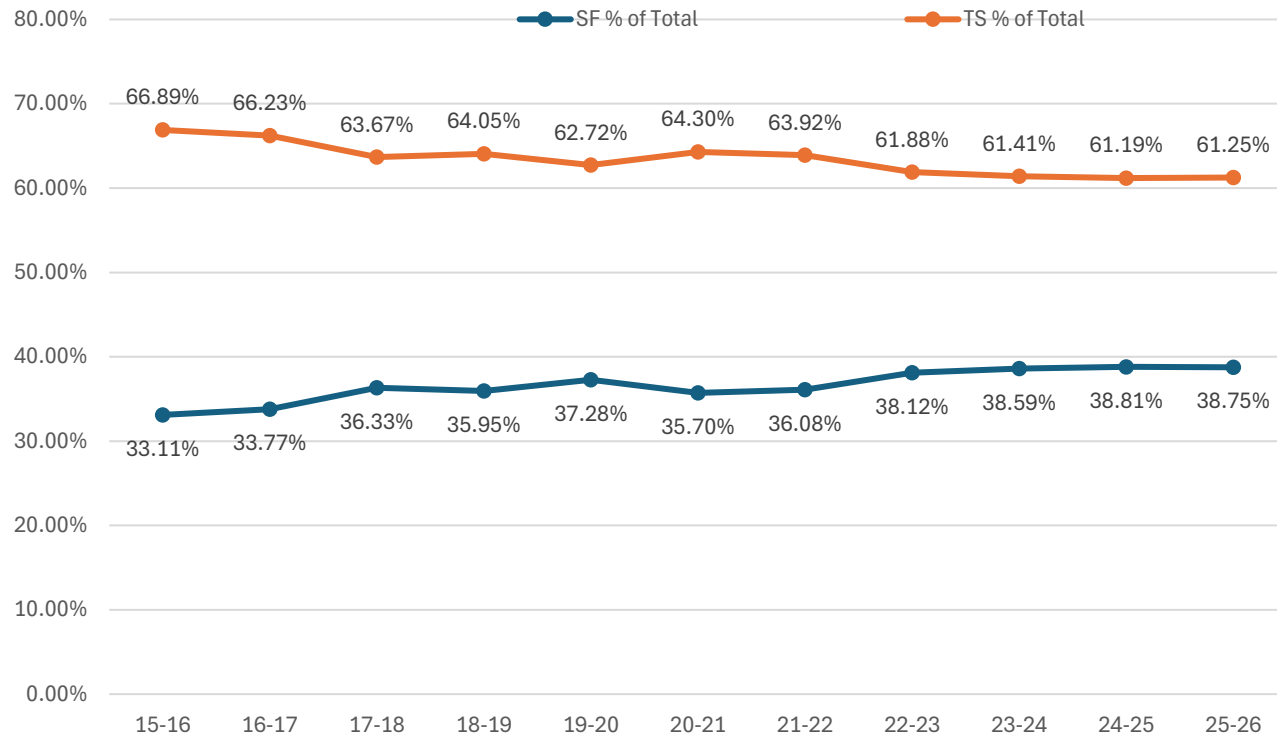
Other Considerations

- Impact on Students
 - Fewer IUs and classes taught may make it difficult for students to graduate on time.
 - Specialized faculty often teach pre-req courses. Impact on time to degree?
- What exactly does it mean “to increase the faculty member's usefulness to the University.” What are the expected benefits?

Other Options

- Create new professional development leave or fellowship program
 - Pay level? Eligibility? At college or campus level?
- Course reduction/release
 - Pay level? Eligibility? At college or campus level?
- Existing educational leave
 - Unpaid

Tenure System & Specialized Faculty as a % of Total Faculty by AY Source: DMI



Faculty Headcount by AY Specialized Faculty & Tenure System Source: DMI

