



# Report on Sabbatical/Paid Leave for RTPC Faculty at USC

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**Facilitated by the Research, Teaching, Practitioner, and  
Clinical Faculty Affairs Committee (RTPC-FAC)**

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# RTPC-FAC Duties

The RTPC Faculty Affairs committee monitors and evaluates:

- the working environment
- terms and conditions of employment
- job security and compensation
- benefits eligibility
- opportunities for participation in governance
- opportunities for professional advancement
- participation in the academic life of the university provided for non-tenure-track faculty.

## Charge for 2022-23

In Spring 2022, the USC Academic Senate tasked our committee with envisioning “The Future of Faculty Work.” This involved conducting an analysis of current trends in RTPC work (at USC and beyond), with an eye towards guiding our shared trajectory at USC.

The full contents of our report are on the RTPC-FAC page of the Academic Senate website, under the “Committees” tab, and also here:

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Rzzp15ZTsYhWlQ5r2JUvCQEvkazcoDL2Q2WKY\\_jEIQM/edit](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Rzzp15ZTsYhWlQ5r2JUvCQEvkazcoDL2Q2WKY_jEIQM/edit)

# Rationale for Expansion of Sabbatical/Paid Leave Eligibility Criteria

## 1. Improved Faculty Retention

The 2021-2022 survey of junior to mid-career faculty conducted by the Faculty Environment and Employment Committee (FEEC) found that 65% of those surveyed (71% of whom identified as RTPC) stated that they were likely to apply for positions outside USC in the next few years. Attributing factors for this risk to faculty retention included among other issues: better financial opportunities elsewhere, disappointment with university culture, and lack of career advancement and support

## 1. Support for Innovation in Track-Specific Activities

- Professional development funds and short-term course releases can be limited in scope and impact
- Provide labor and time needed to develop new, interdisciplinary courses, innovative research methods, or community outreach (for example)

## 1. Improved student outcomes and advancement of the educational mission of the university

## 1. Capitalize on the intellectual capital of RTPC faculty/enhance performance

# Examples of Current RTPC Sabbatical/Paid Leave Offerings at USC

Current sabbaticals/paid leaves are:

- One semester at full pay/benefits
- For RTPC faculty at full professor or associate professor rank

Price School of Public Policy (Teaching Faculty)

School of Cinematic Arts (SCA) Paid Leave for RTPC Faculty

Advancing Scholarship in the Humanities and Social Sciences

# Limitations of Current Sabbatical/Paid Leave Offerings

- Privilege tenure-track model of traditional academic publishing (book-length creative or scholarly works)
- Few clinical or research faculty eligible to apply (if sabbatical/paid leave exists at their school)
- Not conducive to career advancement, as access is limited to Associate or higher, with some programs such as Dornsife's Advancing Scholarship in the Humanities and Social Sciences (ASHSS) giving "preference . . .to full professors who already have a proven track record of high-quality productivity."
- Lack of formative feedback on unsuccessful applications
- Lack of transparency in selection process

# **RECOMMENDATION 1: Expand eligibility criteria of sabbaticals to track-specific professional activities**

## Teaching

- Development of new, collaborative, and/or interdisciplinary courses and curriculums
- Development of, or training in, new technologies that enhance teaching
- Engaging in track-specific research activities (such as statistical analysis or pedagogical research culminating in a book or article presentation or publication).
- Engagement in pedagogical training, courses, or community outreach that would enrich track-specific activities

## Clinical

- Participation in community programs/outreach
- Development of, or training in, new technologies that enhance teaching
- Completion of supplemental professional development courses, certifications, or other clinical training.
- Engagement in clinical research, statistical analysis, or other activities that might fall outside the scope of typical clinical obligations

## Research

- Participation in collaborative work, such as outreach programs or working in tandem with external labs
- Engagement in research that is track specific but may fall outside the scope of traditional duties, such as writing grants, articles, or books
- Participation in training or professional development programs

## Practitioner

- Engagement in field/track-specific professional activities, such as creative endeavors, touring, or field work
- Participation in supplemental professional development, such as certification or training programs



## **RECOMMENDATION 2: Have each school develop (or expand) RTPC-specific sabbatical/paid leave eligibility criteria to align with Recommendation 1**

- Applications should remain competitive, with applicants having a minimum of 3 years or more of uninterrupted full-time service.
- Proposals would be assessed for their potential contributions to the applicant's field, school, and the university.

## **RECOMMENDATION 3: Generate and make accessible assessment criteria for RTPC sabbatical/paid leave proposals**

## **RECOMMENDATION 4: Create sustainable funding to support school-wide sabbatical expansion**

- Current arts and humanities sabbaticals (ASHSS) at Dornsife college are funded at the university level, with the Provost's office providing the Dean with funds to defray teaching replacement costs.
- We therefore suggest an expansion of this initiative to other schools and programs, in concert with the expanded eligibility criteria, discussed above.
- Given known budgetary constraints, we also recommend the use of matching funds at the Provost level, which would reduce budgetary impacts at the level of each school.

# References and Links

RTPC Fac Affairs preliminary findings Spring 2022:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1B9kDHLeu6ksvO7chYVtyE2k-xqRjHfSe/view?usp=share\\_link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1B9kDHLeu6ksvO7chYVtyE2k-xqRjHfSe/view?usp=share_link)

RTPC Fac Affairs white paper Fall 2022:

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Rzzp15ZTsYhWlQ5r2JUvCQEvkazcoDL2Q2WKY\\_jEIQM/edit?usp=share\\_link](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Rzzp15ZTsYhWlQ5r2JUvCQEvkazcoDL2Q2WKY_jEIQM/edit?usp=share_link)

Non Tenure-Track Full-time Teaching Faculty Leave Policy at the Price School of Public Policy:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1nd3K-2k4jJK2byypXyo6h\\_dGXLr6wruT/view?usp=share\\_link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1nd3K-2k4jJK2byypXyo6h_dGXLr6wruT/view?usp=share_link)

School of Cinematic Arts (SCA) Paid Leave for RTPC Faculty

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1szptiXBSP9BjIve5mP2nEgnTPhgYNkre/edit?usp=share\\_link&oid=101268811594196509610&rtpof=true&sd=true](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1szptiXBSP9BjIve5mP2nEgnTPhgYNkre/edit?usp=share_link&oid=101268811594196509610&rtpof=true&sd=true)

Advancing Scholarship in the Humanities and Social Sciences

<https://faculty.usc.edu/scholarship/ashss/>

The RTPC Faculty Fellowship at Marshall

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/10BVIIIISL2LNfjWD5cJH5DPwtcj22gv0k/edit?usp=share\\_link&oid=101268811594196509610&rtpof=true&sd=true](https://docs.google.com/document/d/10BVIIIISL2LNfjWD5cJH5DPwtcj22gv0k/edit?usp=share_link&oid=101268811594196509610&rtpof=true&sd=true)