

To: Ms. Catherine Giovannetti, College Council Chair

From: Dr. DeRionne Pollard, President

Subject: **College Council Recommendation 19-06: Faculty representation in sabbatical leave training**

Date: June 5, 2019

Thank you and all the members of the College's participatory governance system for your leadership in considering issues of importance to the Montgomery College community. I have received and reviewed the College Council's recommendation 19-06: Faculty representation in sabbatical leave training. The document presented to me by the College Council is attached.

On April 23, 2019, the College Council voted to move recommendation 19-06 forward to the President. This action recommends that the College include one or more faculty representatives from the previous year's sabbatical leave committee, selected by the previous year's chair, to participate in the workshop offered by the sabbatical leave coordinator from The Office of Human Resources and Strategic Talent Management (HRSTM) to prospective sabbatical applicants during fall professional week.

Based on my review, I am approving this recommendation and assigning it to Ms. Donna Schena, interim senior vice president for administrative and fiscal affairs for implementation.

Thank you for your dedicated service to Montgomery College's governance system and all of the work you do to support Montgomery College's mission and vision. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have further questions or concerns.

Attachment

cc: Senior Administrative Leadership Team
Director of Governance (Administrative Associates)

Governance Recommendation

Council

Faculty Council

Co-chairs: Shweta Sen and Dan Santore

Date

Recommendation Issue/Concern

The sabbatical application process officially starts in the month of August. A workshop for prospective applicants is offered during the fall Professional Week by the Sabbatical Leave Program Coordinator from the Office of Human Resources and Strategic Talent Management (HRSTM). A sabbatical applicant then initiates the process by first discussing his/her project with his/her chair and dean. The final proposal and application, complete with all the supporting documents and the signatures of the dean, chair, and vice president and provost of the respective area is submitted to HRSTM by early November. The Sabbatical Leave Committee meets on the Friday of the Professional Week of the following spring semester (toward the end of January), discusses the applications, notifies the applicants of the status of their proposals, and submits their recommendations to HRSTM by the beginning of February. See the attached "Timeline Guide for Sabbatical Leave Applications for Leave Periods Fall2019, Spring 2020."

Note that from the point where the faculty-led Sabbatical Leave Committee reviews the sabbatical proposals to the point where it submits its recommendations to HRSTM, it has no contact with the faculty applicants. Whatever questions the applicants may have about the process and the content of their proposals are addressed only by HRSTM personnel. While HRSTM staff can answer process related questions, they are not in a position to answer content related questions. The latter is academic in nature and can be addressed only by the faculty serving on the Sabbatical Leave Committee.

This is, therefore, a glaring gap in the sabbatical application process, that prospective applicants do not have a single opportunity to have their questions and clarifications addressed by the people who will actually review their applications and make recommendations to the senior administration. Granted that the "Sabbatical Leave Application Evaluation and Scoring Rubric" is made available to faculty through the HRSTM website, it nevertheless needs to be taken into account that individual reading of the rubric is highly relative and that the interpretation of it may vary from discipline to discipline based on their differing methodologies.

Recommendation:

Include one or more faculty representatives from the previous year's Sabbatical Leave Committee, selected by the previous year's Chair, to participate in the workshop offered by the Sabbatical Leave Program Coordinator from HRSTM for prospective sabbatical applicants during fall Professional Week.

Student Impact

A well-structured sabbatical proposal that is in alignment with the College's mission and strategic and academic master plan can enhance pedagogical methods and enrich faculty experience. A sound sabbatical project completed by faculty is in the best interest of the students.

Economic Impact

The funds allocated for faculty sabbatical leave will be well-spent with a concerted effort on the part of HRSTM and the faculty-led Sabbatical Leave Committee. This kind of a coordinated effort can help applicants compose solid sabbatical proposals, which can have tremendous economic returns in the long term for students, faculty, and the College as a whole.