

# Sabbatical

## What is a sabbatical?

A sabbatical is a paid leave of absence from teaching and service responsibilities for 6 or 12 months. The Collective Agreement states, “Sabbatical leave is intended to promote high levels of scholarly and professional activity by employees through sustained periods of concentrated study, contemplation, and creative work, and through the extension of the range of contacts of employees to other people, places, experiences, and ideas.” (This lyrical text dates from YUFA’s very first Agreement in 1976.)

## Who is eligible for a sabbatical?

Tenure-track or tenured employees are eligible to receive sabbatical credits and are entitled to take sabbatical when they’ve accumulated 6 credits. YUFA members with Special Renewable Contracts (SRCs) are eligible for only one sabbatical. Members with Contractually Limited Appointments (CLAs) are ineligible.

## How do I get sabbatical credits?

YUFA members receive 1 ‘sabbatical credit’ for each year of service at York. Years spent on leaves of absence without pay normally carry no credit unless agreed to in writing when the leave is approved.

Your letter of appointment should include credits for earlier academic positions, as follows:

- If you are coming from a **‘full-time’ position at another university**, you get 1 credit for every 2 years of service since either your last sabbatical or your appointment there, whichever is more recent. The maximum is 3 credits.
- If you have had a **CLA at York**, you get 1 credit for each year of service, to a maximum of 4 credits.

- If you have held **Type 1 appointments in CUPE 3903**, you get 1 credit for each block of 3 such appointments, with no more than 1 credit per year in CUPE. The maximum is 6 credits.

## **On what date will my sabbatical begin?**

For faculty, sabbaticals usually begin on either 1 July or 1 January. For librarians, they begin on the 1st of the anniversary month of your appointment.

## **What paperwork do I need to do in connection with my sabbatical?**

1. You must write to your Dean / Principal / University Librarian indicating your intent to take the leave and provide, to the extent described in the Collective Agreement, a 'general statement' of your planned activities. For faculty, the deadline is 15 months before the normal start of your sabbatical; for librarians, it's 12 months. If you receive no response within three months, your sabbatical is deemed approved.

- Clauses 20.05 and 20.11 say that should you fail to express your plans to take / advance / delay your sabbatical, you are waiving your entitlement.

If management intends to delay your leave in the interests of scheduling course offerings or library services, you must receive notice in writing 14 months in advance for faculty and 9 months in advance for librarians. If your sabbatical is denied, you must be notified within 3 months of your request. Don't worry, such delays and denials are rare.

2. You are supposed to file a report on your leave. For faculty, the deadline is the 1st of November following your return; for librarians, it's 3 months following your return.

## **Can I delay my sabbatical or take it early?**

Yes. To do so, you must get the permission of your Dean / Principal / University Librarian.

- Clauses 20.05 and 20.11 say that should you fail to express your plans to take / advance / delay your sabbatical, you are waiving your entitlement.

If an early sabbatical is approved, note that you'll still need a total of 6 credits before starting to accumulate credits toward your next sabbatical.

## **Can I take a sabbatical before I receive tenure?**

Yes, but the Dean / Principal / University Librarian has the discretion to delay it.

## **What if I have unused sabbatical credits when I'm nearing my 'normal retirement date'?**

Two clauses increase your options in the years before your 'normal retirement date'. The first pertains to pension top-ups and the second to flexibility in how unused sabbatical credits are used.

1. Clause 14.05 (a) (i) is available in the five years before your normal retirement date. If you choose this option, the Employer will make pension contributions based on full academic base salary if you do the same, but it also means that you are taking your last sabbatical ever.

- Does using this clause mean that you've given formal notice of your planned retirement? No, but if you use it, you've taken your very last sabbatical – whether you retire the following year or 30 years later! (Of course, if you don't use this clause, the option to top-up pension contributions yourself is still available under clause 20.18 (a).)
- 2. Clause 14.05 (a) (iii) is available in the year immediately preceding your normal retirement date. It says that if you have:
  - *3 to 5 unused credits, you're entitled to take a 6-month sabbatical at 80% salary or a 1.0 full course reduction in your teaching load.*
  - *6 or more unused credits, you're entitled to choose between a 1-year sabbatical at 80% pay and a 6-month sabbatical at 100% pay.*
  - *1 or 2 unused credits, this clause doesn't do anything for you.*

Note: effective 1 May 2013, reference above to 80% should be amended to 82.5%.

If you choose this option, you can keep working and accruing sabbatical credits after your normal retirement date, but at that point, your sabbatical credits are reset at zero. If you don't use this clause, that reset doesn't occur.

For more information on clause 14.05, see Appendix R in the 2012-2015 Collective Agreement.

## **What will my salary and benefits be while I'm on sabbatical?**

If it's your **first** sabbatical leave, whether from York or elsewhere, your pay will generally continue at its normal level. Members with salaries above the YUFA average (\$120,140, in 2009-2010) should consult clause 20.17 (b)(i), as their sabbatical pay may be less.

**Subsequent** sabbaticals can be either 6-month leaves at 100% pay or regular 1-year leaves at 80% pay (note, this amount increases to 82.5% effective 1 May 2013) ... unless, per clause 25.12, the Employer agrees to give you a higher pay rate. For example, some members have bargained for 100% salary during the sabbatical they take after completing a heavy service load.

New in the 2012-2015 Collective Agreement, members taking a 1-year sabbatical can choose to reduce their salary to 90% in the year preceding and the year of sabbatical (note, this amount increases to 91.25, effective 1 May 2013).

If you have other forms of income during your leave (e.g., external grants or teaching elsewhere), the Employer's support may be reduced. Consult clause 20.17.

While you're on sabbatical, all benefits continue as before. Note, however, that your and the Employer's pension contributions are based on your actual earnings. If your sabbatical earnings from York are less than 100% of your regular earnings, you have the option of making up the difference in pension contributions.

## **What support do YUFA and the Employer provide for sabbaticants' research or salaries?**

The Leave Fellowship Fund provides peer-adjudicated grants of up to \$12,500 or 10% of your salary (although in practice awards are often much less) if you're on your 2<sup>nd</sup> or subsequent sabbatical. You're eligible only if your sabbatical will be for a full year, not if it's for 6 months. The total amount of the Fund is \$275,000. The Fund covers research costs associated with sabbatical projects, including travel, supplies, equipment, and research assistance. A committee judges the applications on the need for the funds, the applicant's research record and the proposal.

Follow these links for more info:

**[Guidelines](#)**

**[Application Form](#)**

## **What if I fall ill or become a parent while on sabbatical?**

You should request that your sabbatical arrangements be modified (e.g., suspended) or postponed. Contact YUFA if you need assistance in this process.