CONCEPT 30 articulated a future vision of the School of Arts and Sciences as a community of learners anchored in the liberal arts, with a commitment to deep inquiry within and across the disciplines of the humanities, natural sciences, performing arts, and social sciences. Central to this vision is the sense of an intellectual community that members share in constructing together.

CONCEPT 30 strives to create opportunities for community members to thrive. For faculty, sabbaticals are an essential part of thriving as active teacher-scholars, providing opportunities to embark on, continue with, or complete scholarly, intellectual, and creative projects. All of these projects require—and benefit from—long investments of time and effort. A full-year sabbatical is a valuable opportunity to undertake this work, and many faculty apply for external grants to make such work possible.

Beginning in academic year 2018-2019, A&S started a three-year pilot program of a new Sabbatical Fellowship opportunity, one that seeks to promote intellectual community and greater access to sabbatical funding. The fellowship has funds to provide up to three faculty members a full-year sabbatical at 100% of their salary.

Under existing sabbatical policies, faculty are able to take a semester sabbatical at 100% of their salary, or elect to take 50% of their salary for a full-year sabbatical. Faculty members may also apply for an enhanced sabbatical that provides 80% of their salary for a full year. Recognizing that the salary reductions in both cases pose an obstacle for some faculty seeking a full-year sabbatical, the Dean’s Office of the School of Arts and Sciences is piloting the fellowship program to make a full-year sabbatical at full salary an option for three faculty members a year over a three-year period.

This fellowship is a new and additional opportunity that does not in any way alter or affect existing sabbatical policies, including the option for an enhanced sabbatical, the faculty’s ability to receive external funding to supplement A&S funds (but not exceed 100% of their salary), or the availability of topping-off funds for faculty who have received external funding but who are still not at 100% of their salary.

Eligibility Requirements

The fellowship competition will be open to all tenured faculty who have been approved for a full year sabbatical. Applicants must apply for a sabbatical in accordance with the A&S sabbatical policy and the Faculty Handbook. Priority will be given to tenured professors who are working to build their promotion cases.

All applicants are required to apply for external funding to be considered for the Sabbatical Fellowship. (Note: For the first year of the pilot program in 2018-2019, the committee considered applications from faculty who had not applied for external grants, as the deadline for many grants had already passed by the time the fellowship was announced; this exception no longer applies).
At both the review and selection stages, careful consideration will be given to balancing the fellowships across the humanities, social sciences, and sciences. As the number of applications from different areas may greatly vary in a given year, this distribution may at times need to be spread across multiple years; the goal, though, will be to have a balanced number of fellowships awarded over the three years of the pilot. Applicants may note in their applications particular challenges they face in funding within their disciplines.

Fellowship Requirements

One of the central aims of the sabbatical fellowships will be to foster intellectual community. This aim will be promoted in two distinct ways:

(1) The three fellows will form a cohort for the year, discussing their projects with each other, sharing knowledge and encouragement, and providing updates on progress. While the projects themselves may be quite different, at the heart of the liberal arts endeavor is the belief that the richest intellectual life is achieved through exchanges across disciplines, and in learning about subjects outside one’s own specialty.

In any given year, individual fellows may be pursuing their fellowships on campus or in places far from campus, so the cohort will need to establish the best way to stay in regular contact for their particular group. They may meet in person, virtually, or find another way to communicate. Fellows are expected to meet in some fashion at least monthly over the course of the sabbatical. Fellows do NOT need to be in Richmond during their sabbaticals to participate in the cohort.

(2) In the semester following the fellowship, the cohort must develop a way to share their research with the larger university community in a public forum. It will be up to the cohort to establish the best method in a given year. They might decide to have a public lecture; they might work on a series of individual podcasts; they might have series of podcasts where they explain each other’s work; they might decide to present their work individually (with support from the other two), or they might find another method.

(3) The cohort will be asked to submit a report midway through the sabbatical year on the cohort meetings and to offer a more comprehensive report at the end of the fellowship. To help assess the policies and impact of the fellowship program, past fellows will be invited to discuss their experiences and their research outcomes with the committee. The guidelines for the fellows cohort maybe found here.

Application Process

The application for the 2019-20 fellowship is due on at 5 PM on the Tuesday following the first week of classes for the spring term (Tuesday, January 21, 2020). The application materials should be submitted as PDF files and should be submitted by email to as@richmond.edu.

A complete application will include the following elements:
1. A sabbatical proposal for a year-long fellowship. The proposal may be the same as the sabbatical proposal(s) already submitted. Proposals should lay out the conception, definition, and organization of the project, should outline the potential significance of the project’s contribution to its discipline, and should be specific about what the applicant hopes to achieve during the fellowship.

2. A statement on how the UR, A&S, and departmental communities will benefit from the successful completion of the proposed project, and how the sabbatical work would support the goals laid out in the Fellowship Requirements outlined above. Applicants are asked to pay particular attention to this important part of the application, as inattention to this component can compromise the application. Please comment specifically on how you might envision working within a fellowship cohort and how your project might be shared with a larger public forum.

3. An up-to-date curriculum vitae.

4. A list of any grants and/or fellowships that (i) are currently active, (ii) were applied for during the previous or current academic year, and/or (iii) are pending applications.
   a. The name and/or type of grant or fellowship;
   b. The agency or foundation that sponsors the grant or fellowship;
   c. The amount of the salary award that has been requested and/or rewarded;
   d. The date of the application; and
   e. The date by which you expect to learn if the award has been granted.

5. Copies of the grant or fellowship proposals you have already submitted to support your sabbatical.

Review of Applications

Applications will be reviewed by the six faculty members on the Ad-Hoc Committee on Sabbatical Fellowships and Sabbatical Policy and by the three associate deans. The six members consist of two representatives from each division without overlaps among departments to allow members to recuse themselves from considering colleagues from their own departments.

The six faculty will make general recommendations based on merit, as will the three Associate Deans, using the fellowship rubric as a guide. (The rubric can be found here.) The nine members will then make recommendations for finalists in a meeting with the Dean. Final selections will be made by the Dean.

The Ad-Hoc Committee will assess the selection process after each year and make recommendations about the structure and policies of the committee for subsequent years.

Committee members for 2019-2020

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