

## **CONSERVATORY FACULTY ABSENCE POLICY**

### **Endorsed by Conservatory Faculty March 1, 2016 to be included in the Conservatory Faculty Handbook**

All instructional faculty and staff are expected to meet each scheduled class/rehearsal/lesson and will provide scheduled instruction as assigned on a regular basis during each week of each 15-week semester. Professors will submit their semester's teaching schedule to the Dean's office by the end of the first week of classes. On occasion, for reasons other than illness, religious observances, or emergencies, faculty may be absent from regularly scheduled classes and lessons for professional activities.

A faculty member's work is defined by their teaching, professional activities, and service. Indeed, members of the Conservatory of Music and Dance faculty have always been encouraged to accept professional engagements provided that assigned teaching duties can be carried out satisfactorily. A reasonable amount of such activity is expected in accordance with the criteria for reappointment, promotion, and tenure. Further, activities of this type are reported as part of annual faculty review procedures. These activities are typically scheduled to avoid missing regularly scheduled instruction. On occasion, this is not possible.

All full-time faculty who plan to be away from Kansas City or absent from regularly scheduled classes and lessons for local professional activities are required to inform the Dean and Division Chairs via the Faculty Professional Activity Form. The total number of travel days for any given semester where a faculty member misses a class or regularly scheduled lesson based on the schedule submitted should not exceed 20% of scheduled teaching days. If additional days beyond the 20% are needed for professional development/research, the faculty member may request a meeting with the Dean to petition for additional time. Absences that exceed two *consecutive* weeks must be discussed in advance with the Division Chair and the Dean. Further, it is necessary to discuss any proposed absence as early as possible to ensure that suitable arrangements are made, guaranteeing that students receive the kind of instruction to which they are entitled. In some instances, this may require making appropriate arrangements to have other instructional faculty with the necessary qualifications and training to provide the scheduled instruction. In the event that the Dean or Division Chair feels that a faculty member is not planning well for covering classes or make-up lessons the Dean or Chair may require additional information to accompany the absence form. Applied faculty are expected to be in attendance at all audition days. Requests to be absent from an audition day must be approved by the Dean prior to September 15 of the academic year.

A Faculty Professional Absence Form must be submitted for these purposes. This requirement is not intended to limit the freedom of the faculty member to participate in professional activities, nor is it intended to infringe on her/his personal rights or responsibilities, and permission will normally be granted automatically if the absence falls under the above base expectations. Official notification of absences is needed in order to respond to inquiries that often arise while faculty are away and to facilitate the orderly administration of the Conservatory. In addition, the form serves as a method of documenting the extensive professional work the faculty contributes to the discipline, and will be utilized for the occasional necessary internal (University) and external (Public Relations) proof of this important work. It is important that your Travel Authorization be completed and approved. Failure to do so could lead to questions as to whether your absence from campus was related to your employment or whether University insurance coverage would apply in the case of an accident.

For faculty applying for travel funding support, requests should be submitted by September 15 of the fall semester and by January 15 of the spring semester for full consideration. Later requests may be considered in extenuating circumstances, but available funds may be encumbered by earlier requests.

The Dean's office will respond to faculty absence requests within two weeks of submission.