

How to handle the accrual of annual leave
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During the expedited portion of negotiations in Spring 2011, one of the issues we addressed was the accrual of annual leave. There are two categories of faculty who have accrued annual leave:

1. Faculty members who at one time held an administrative position, and accrued annual leave because they were on a fiscal year appointment, but who have since returned to faculty positions on an academic year appointment. These faculty members, unless they move to another administrative job, or move to category 2, below, will never accrue any more annual leave.
2. Faculty members who, by virtue of the nature of their jobs, currently hold fiscal year appointments. These faculty members will continue to accrue annual leave for as long as they are on fiscal year.

The new Article 27.§1 has language on Annual Leave that describes the revised policies for accrual and payouts for Annual Leave. You can find this language at <http://www.wmuaaup.net/Negotiation.html>

What it says, in brief, about category 1 is that any faculty members who returned to faculty from an administrative position before July 1, 2010 will be paid for their unused leave at the time of their separation from Western; separation can occur in any of the ways you might imagine, either through retirement, or moving to another job at another university, or horizontally.

What it says about category 2 is somewhat more complicated, but the essence is this: Use your leave in a timely manner, or lose it.

Why did the administration's team want to get this change for category 2 faculty? Because the new accounting rules that they must follow require them to carry as a debit on their balance sheet the total amount of money that they might need to have on hand to pay off all of the accrued leave. Too many \$\$millions there, and it affects their credit and bonding abilities. So they want as much of that off the books as possible. Thus their new policy is to not allow accrued leave to build up over the years.

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This has put some faculty members into an odd position: They have to take time off, before July 1, 2012. If they have more than a specified number of accrued hours on July 1, those hours will be reduced; there will be further reductions on July 1, 2013. In other words, Western is demanding that people take time off. People cannot claim they are using leave days, get paid extra for them, and continue to work; Western's position is that you can only be paid for one thing at a time, so if you need to take leave in order to get paid for it, you cannot be paid for something else at the same time. So if you are in category 2, you must take annual leave if you want to be able to use it; otherwise, you lose it.

If you need help getting a supervisor or chair to let you take time off, we will assist you, as will the Provost's office; they have promised to be persuasive where persuasion is needed. There may be a few individuals who have a more complicated situation; if you think that you are among them, please give us a call, or send an email, so that we can see if there is something we can help you with.

But you do have to take time off. If your choice is to keep working because, "My students need me," then you will lose your hours, and will have no way of getting them back. You earned the benefit, but you must use it now instead of banking it indefinitely. It is Western's direct order that you must leave off serving students in order to use your allotted annual leave; so it is Western's problem to solve, not yours, when you do take leave.

Please check your paycheck "stub" online through GoWMU to see how many hours you have; you should find it towards the lower left. Then read Article 27 at the link listed above to see how it might affect you. Any problems? Please get in touch.

But remember, Use It Or Lose It!

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