

### Example Abstracts for the Faculty Development Leave Program

Each faculty development leave (FDL) proposal is reviewed at the college or library level by a committee which includes faculty representation. Each application includes a brief abstract which is reviewed by the Board of Regents prior to approval of the leave.

These abstracts are limited to 100 words, must be written in the third person, **should be written for an educated layperson**, and must include:

- Place where leave will take place
- Activities that will take place during the leave
- Benefits of the leave to:
  - Research program
  - Students/teaching
  - Department, college and/or university
- Expected impacts (should be focused on effects beneficial to the University)

*\*Note: the abstract should not be composed of bullet points; the outline provided above is for guidance in composition only.*

Over the past several years, an increasing number of abstracts have been submitted which do not meet the Board of Regents' criteria listed above. This has resulted in many of the abstracts having to be re-written by the FDL liaisons for the college, or by DOF or TAMU System staff in order for the abstracts to be acceptable and the FDL to be granted to the faculty member.

**Beginning in 2015, we will no longer re-write abstracts that fail to meet the Board of Regents' standards listed above. Abstracts which do not meet these standards will be returned to the faculty member who is applying for leave to be re-written. If the re-written abstract is submitted after October 23, or if the re-written abstract is not satisfactory to the committee, the faculty member will be denied leave.**

In order to provide guidance to faculty members, department heads, college review committees, and deans, the following table contains a number of the abstracts which were edited and submitted to the Board of Regents last year, presented next to their original submitted form. The abstracts are organized by college. Faculty member's names have been removed, but the details of their leave have been left in place so as not to alter the meaning of the abstracts.

**Texas A&M School of Law**

<b>Before</b>	<b>After</b>
<p>There has been much analysis of Supreme Court opinions based on substantive merit but little assessment of the writing strength of the Justices or their opinions. Located in Dallas/Fort Worth, my project, tentatively entitled, "Supreme Grading: Evaluating the High Court's Writing Ability," would provide rare and unique scholarly commentary on the Court's legal writing. Clear legal writing by the Court is critical to ensuring that lower courts and legislators understand the Constitution. This project will select and develop metrics to govern critical writing assessments of the Supreme Court's opinions, culminating in an article, future book project and law school Symposium.</p>	<p>Leave will be spent in Dallas/Fort Worth with travel to Washington, D.C. to work at the Library of Congress and other locations that further a project focused on assessing the writing of the Justices of the Supreme Court. There has been much analysis of Supreme Court opinions based on substantive merit but little assessment of the writing strength of the Justices or their opinions. The project, tentatively entitled Supreme Grading: Evaluating the High Court's Writing Ability, would provide rare and unique scholarly commentary on the Court's legal writing. Clear legal writing by the Court is critical to ensuring that lower courts and legislators understand the Constitution. This project will select and develop metrics to govern critical writing assessments of the Supreme Court's opinions, culminating in an article, future book project and law school symposium.</p>