

Faculty Absences from Campus during the Academic Year

September 12, 2006

To: All Brown faculty

From: Rajiv Vohra, Dean of the Faculty

Subj.: Faculty Absences from Campus during the Academic Year

I write to remind you of University policy concerning faculty absences from campus. The 'Faculty Rules and Regulations' specify that faculty members must be present and regularly available on campus during the academic year, starting with the beginning of Orientation Week and ending with Commencement. While there is no explicit exception noted regarding the period between semesters, it has long been understood that many faculty members use this time for concentrated research efforts, including travel that takes them away from campus. Faculty members are nevertheless reminded that they have an obligation to contribute to departmental activities that normally take place during the month of January, especially since this can be an important time for faculty searches.

Classes are expected to meet during all regularly scheduled class meeting times during the semester; classes that are not held for legitimate reasons should be rescheduled in conformance with 'The Faculty Rules and Regulations'. If classes are not held during Reading Period, an alternative assignment should be given and must be announced at the beginning of the semester. As I know you appreciate, repeated and extended absences from campus during the academic year by some faculty members can lead to justifiable complaints from students. Missed class sessions and failure to submit grades in a timely fashion place the University in jeopardy of violating the implicit contract it makes with each registered student to provide a full semester of instruction and timely and adequate evaluation of the student's performance.

There are, of course, many legitimate reasons why a faculty member may need to be absent from campus for short periods. In order to meet our obligations to our students and still make it possible for faculty to be away from campus for these legitimate professional reasons, each faculty member is asked to observe the following guidelines in planning for absences during the academic year:

- The faculty member should notify her/his Department Chairperson at least ten days in advance of the anticipated absence, including the purpose of the absence.
- Department chairs should notify the Dean of the Faculty or the Dean of Medicine and Biological Sciences, as appropriate, when they intend to be away from campus, with the same minimum amount of notification. They should provide information about any arrangements for coverage of responsibilities in the department during their absence.
- The faculty member should inform the Chairperson of what arrangements have been made for the teaching or make-up of any classes that will be missed during the absence. It is the responsibility of each faculty member, in consultation with the chair or director

of the relevant department or program, to insure that adequate provision is made for the teaching or make-up of missed class meetings, and for adequate coverage of other department responsibilities that might be missed during that faculty member's absence.

- The faculty member should also insure that adequate phone and mail contact information is left with the Department should it become necessary to contact the faculty member while he/she is away.

In addition to the arrangements outlined in (1) - (3) above, any faculty member anticipating an absence from campus of **two weeks or more** should take the following additional steps:

- At least two weeks prior to the absence, obtain the approval of the Department Chairperson, and notify the Dean of the Faculty or the Dean of Medicine and Biological Sciences.
- Note the absence on all course syllabi at the beginning of the semester and provide information on the syllabus about coverage or rescheduling of the affected class periods.