

Fiscal Estimate Narratives

UWS 6/13/2003

LRB Number 03-2528/2	Introduction Number AB-377	Estimate Type Original
Subject Eliminating GPR funding for paid sabbatical leave		

Assumptions Used in Arriving at Fiscal Estimate

Colleges and universities establish sabbatical leave programs to enable faculty to discover and share new knowledge that will enhance their teaching and scholarship. The UW System's sabbatical leave program is governed by section 36.11 (17), Wis. Stats., which permits the Board of Regents to grant up to one year of sabbatical leave to instructional faculty "in order to recognize and enhance teaching efforts and excellence". That section also imposes a number of restrictions on sabbaticals, including the following:

"Sabbaticals may be granted to only those faculty members who have completed six or more years of full-time instructional service in the UW System;

"Only one sabbatical leave may be granted for each six years of full-time instructional service in the UW System;

"A faculty member will receive compensation while on sabbatical leave, but the compensation, combined with outside compensation earned while on leave, may not exceed the compensation the faculty member normally receives;

"Funding for the sabbatical leave program must be provided from the UW System's existing general operations appropriation.

Board of Regents' policy places additional limits on compensation for faculty members on sabbatical. Leave for one semester is compensated at up to 100% of the faculty member's salary and no replacement staffing is hired. Leave for an entire academic year is compensated at up to 65% of the faculty member's salary. In any year, only 3-3.5% of faculty receive sabbaticals, compared to other universities which give 5-10% of faculty such opportunities. Generally, there are no additional costs incurred by campuses for sabbaticals. Instructional responsibilities of professors on leave are assumed by their colleagues, by visiting faculty funded through salary savings generated by year-long sabbaticals, or by rescheduling courses. Thus, the UW System's sabbatical leave program is a reassignment of duties and is self-funded. There is no separate budget line for funding sabbaticals, as is the case at some other institutions.

LRB 03-2528/2 would amend s. 36.11 (17) (g) to permit the Board of Regents to fund sabbaticals only from gift and grant funds. This proposed legislation would take effect July 1, 2003.

It would not be feasible to fund the sabbatical program with gifts and grants. These funds are almost always donated or awarded for a specific purpose. The Board of Regents would not have the discretion to alter the terms of the gift or grant. UW sabbaticals would, therefore, be uncompensated. Since it is unlikely that faculty would take uncompensated sabbatical leave, LRB 03-2528/2 would not be expected to generate any savings.

However, enactment of this proposal would likely increase costs for the UW System. Because virtually all public and private institutions of higher education in the United States offer paid sabbatical leaves, the proposed legislation would put UW campuses at an enormous competitive disadvantage relative to hiring new faculty. Institutions would have to expend additional funds on faculty recruitment and would have to implement alternatives to sabbaticals as inducements for new faculty to come to and remain at the UW System. An additional cost of eliminating paid sabbatical leave would be the loss of grant monies generated by proposals completed by faculty on leave. For example, in recent years, sabbatical proposals have resulted in \$13 million in grants at UW-Milwaukee. Similar funding started the work in monoclonal antibodies that financed both the UW Biotechnology Center and the Biopulping Consortium which serve Wisconsin cancer patients and our paper industry, respectively.

Long-Range Fiscal Implications