



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

College of Social
& Behavioral Sciences

Policy title: SBS PRESTIGIOUS FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS

Revised January 15, 2026; March 18, 2026

PURPOSE/INTENT

This policy clarifies eligibility, requirements, and processes that enable faculty to accept prestigious external fellowships or awards that require a period of leave from regular University duties.

UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA POLICY

Prestigious fellowships and awards. [Per UHAP 8.03.03 on Externally Supported Research Assignments](#) (ERSA), the University may provide up to a maximum of 50% of the normal full salary to enable appointed personnel to accept prestigious external fellowships or awards for research or creative activity that do not provide the recipient's normal full salary. Such leaves require approval by the unit Head/Director, Dean, and Provost. Recipients must return to the University following the leave for a period of further service equal to the length of the leave. The timing of sabbatical leaves is not affected by externally supported research assignments.

Non-prestigious fellowships and awards. Research activities requiring a leave from regular University duties that do not qualify for prestigious fellowships or awards are treated as leaves of absence without pay, per [UHAP 8.04.01](#).

COLLEGE OF SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES POLICY

Determination of prestigious award status. Prestigious awards warranting an externally supported research assignment are typically nationally or internationally competitive, recognized in a scholarly field or fields, and provide salary or a stipend. SBS Deans maintain a (non-exhaustive) list of fellowships and awards that the Dean has designated prestigious. For awards not on this list, SBS looks to Unit Heads and Directors to advise the Dean on whether specific fellowships, awards, and other leave opportunities conform to the intent of the UHAP ERSA policy, which is primarily to increase the number of truly prestigious awards obtained by faculty.

Eligibility. Tenured, tenure-eligible, continuing status, and continuing-status eligible faculty with 1.0 FTE appointments in SBS are eligible for prestigious award leave to support advancement of research. Faculty with joint appointments in SBS and another college will only be eligible for SBS funding on that proportion of their salary budgeted within SBS. Career-track faculty eligibility and financial support will be determined case by case, depending on alignment of the opportunity with the faculty member's position and contract. CT faculty should consult with their head/director and the Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs regarding eligibility.

Timing, duration, and frequency. The timing and duration of the proposed leave must be congruent with departmental teaching and service needs. Faculty should consult with their head/director about the feasibility of their proposed timeline prior to applying. All faculty must return to service for a period equal or greater in length than their prestigious award leave prior to being eligible for any additional leave. Leaves of more than two semesters in duration (including those combined with sabbaticals) will not

routinely be approved or supported with matching funds, although exceptions may be possible with strong justification. Pre-tenure assistant professors may take a maximum total of 2 semesters of prestigious award leave prior to tenure, not inclusive of one-semester pre-tenure research semester, (i.e., maximum of 3 total semesters of research leave).

Notification and Approval Process

Faculty must request pre-approval for an externally supported research assignment *prior to applying for* the anticipated fellowship or award. Other internal processes and approvals are required for proposals where funds would be routed through the University (required when sponsor allows). Notify your head/director, business center, and SBSRI of your intent to apply *at least 20 days* prior to the application deadline, per the [SBS proposal submission process and timeline](#).

Pre-approval is documented via the [SBS Prestigious Award Pre-Approval Form](#), which should be signed by the faculty member, business manager, unit Head/Director, and Dean's Designee (Associate Dean for Research or Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs). Faculty should work with their business managers to complete the financial terms component of the form. Begin routing the completed form for signatures *at least 15 business days* prior to the application deadline to allow time for review.

Should the application be successful, the award notification will be reviewed for terms and conditions, and the head/director and dean will send a letter of request to the Provost for final approval.

Financial Terms

The maximum amount SBS permits in UA salary for the period in which faculty undertake an ESRA is 50% (including base institutional salary and benefits). If the ESRA is coterminous with a full-year (post-tenure) sabbatical, the maximum UA salary support is 80%. (Note: pre-tenure faculty are eligible for a one-semester *pre-tenure research semester* at full pay; salary support during any other period of leave is capped at 50%). For faculty on academic year contracts, fellowship support in summer months is not counted toward the sponsor contribution to the academic year salary.

SBS and external funding support may not be combined to top off the academic year salary. In cases where the external support is more than 50% of the usual salary, SBS will make up the difference. When the external support is less than 50% of the usual salary, SBS will fund 50%, and an FTE reduction will be required to reflect the reduced total salary.

Faculty are required to route the award funds through the University if the sponsor allows it. In cases where the sponsor requires direct payment to the individual, the faculty salary and FTE will be reduced to .50, the minimum required to maintain benefits eligibility.

Faculty should work with their business managers to review the financial aspects of the prestigious leave.

The Dean's Office will consult with unit leadership to assess and support any needed teaching backfill.