



**Professional Leave 2025 – 2026
March 2025**

T. Chris Riley-Tillman, Provost and Executive Vice President, reports that he has approved the professional leaves listed below and that there will be no additional costs to the University for this program.

Carson College of Business

1. **Chun-Chu (Bamboo) Chen**

School of Hospitality Business Management

Leave Period Requested: January 1 - May 15, 2026

Purpose of Leave: In collaboration with the National Chi Nan University, investigate the psychological and physiological benefits of spa hotel experiences on well-being. Data collection will focus on heart rates and surveys, aiming to influence public health recommendations and hospitality practices.

2. **Stergios Fotopoulos**

Department of Finance and Management Sciences

Leave Period Requested: August 16 - December 31, 2025

Purpose of Leave: Time series models form a prominent class of models for dependent time series data and, more recently, for nonstationary data. Current developments have focused on some specialized features of models, e.g., heavy tails innovation and non-negativity of the model. In this project, the investigator will seek to develop and expand methods for data applicable to such theories.

3. **Kahlil Simeon-Rose**

School of Hospitality Business Management

Leave Period Requested: August 16, 2025 - May 15, 2026

Purpose of Leave: Visit the International Gaming Institute to develop open-source benchmarks for assessing AI solutions that reduce gambling-related harm. By accessing proprietary datasets and collaborating with experts at the IGI, create standardized tools to evaluate machine learning models, enhance industry-responsible gambling practices, and contribute to public health strategies.

College of Agriculture, Human, and Natural Resource Sciences

4. **Caitlin Bletscher***

Department of Human Development

Leave Period Requested: August 18 - December 16, 2025

Purpose of Leave: Represent the Land-Grant mission as a Faculty Associate of the University of Kentucky's Community Innovation Lab. Enhance community-engaged pedagogy and scholarship in the classroom and unity on the Vancouver campus through the Community-Engaged Scholars program. Promote community-engaged assessment publication.

5. **Cory Bolkan**

Department of Human Development

Leave Period Requested: August 16, 2025 - May 15, 2026

Purpose of Leave: Establish a WSU Gerontology collective to explore a transdisciplinary Center or Institute. Enhance leadership skills in health equity and policy through training. Collaborate with experts in elder justice, end-of-life, and dementia caregiving in Japan, Utah, and Wisconsin to advance research and applications.

6. **Joseph Cook**

School of Economic Sciences

Leave Period Requested: August 16 - December 31, 2025

Purpose of Leave: Collaborate with the Swiss Federal Institute of Aquatic Science and Technology to lead the preparation of a funding proposal for a multi-site study on improving urban piped water services in the global South; undertake two related pilot projects.

7. **Benjamin Cowan**

School of Economic Sciences

Leave Period Requested: August 16 - December 31, 2025

Purpose of Leave: Examine the causes and consequences of the sharp increase in remote and hybrid work arrangements beginning in 2020. Team with researchers at the Universities of Duisburg-Essen and Munich to examine differences between the U.S. and Europe in the economic determinants of remote work and the consequences of remote work for health, time use, and children's outcomes.

8. **Arjan Meddens**

School of the Environment

Leave Period Requested: August 16, 2025 - May 15, 2026

Purpose of Leave: Establish a new collaboration with the Natural Resources Institute Finland (Luke) and use satellite data and models to establish improved carbon cycling management actions for European forests. The outcomes include a journal article, a research seminar, and a forest management brief, all focused on carbon dynamics.

9. **Marcia Ostrom**

School of the Environment

Leave Period Requested: July 1 - December 31, 2025

Purpose of Leave: Immigrant, Refugee, and BIPOC communities in Washington have historically faced systemic barriers to producing, harvesting, processing, distributing, and accessing culturally preferred staple foods. The proposed research explores food production and provisioning interests within these Washington communities and identifies opportunities to develop values-based food supply chains that link production and consumption.

10. **Sammy Perone**

Department of Human Development

Leave Period Requested: August 16, 2025 - May 15, 2026

Purpose of Leave: Mental health problems in youth are rising. The professional leave will include networking science methods to identify biomarkers for risk for developing social anxiety in youth. This will help prevent mental health problems before they emerge.

11. **Sindhuja Sankaran**

Department of Biological Systems Engineering

Leave Period Requested: July 1 - December 31, 2025

Purpose of Leave: Research work at the Helmholtz Zentrum Mnchen, Germany (through the Fulbright U.S. Scholar program). Develop strategic partnerships to advance the development of technologies and tools in phenomics research. These efforts will involve scholarships, education, traineeships, and community engagement, both locally and globally.

12. **Lisa Shipley**

School of the Environment

Leave Period Requested: August 16, 2025 - May 15, 2026

Purpose of Leave: Characterize the value of broken rock habitat to wildlife by creating and field-testing a 3-D, physics-based rockpile simulator and realistic biophysical models of a mammal and amphibian in Washington. As part of a diverse team from Alaska and Nevada, develop an NSF proposal to examine interactions between plant chemicals, herbivore hosts, and their microbiome.

College of Arts and Sciences

13. **Mariana Amorim**

Department of Sociology

Leave Period Requested: August 16, 2025 - May 15, 2026

Purpose of Leave: Unveil the impacts of financial subsidies on the quality of care provided by Hispanic grandparent-caregivers. This research will serve as preliminary evidence for a proposal to the National Institute on Aging.

14. **Jesse Brunner**

School of Biological Sciences

Leave Period Requested: January 1 - May 15, 2026

Purpose of Leave: To understand how conditions in captive animal rearing facilities shape the evolution of pathogens; Isolate ranaviruses—often lethal viruses of cold-blooded vertebrates—from bullfrog farms in Brazil, where they are common, and compare their diversity, origins, and traits (e.g., replicate rates, virulence) with wild strains.

15. **Dylan Bugden**

Department of Sociology

Leave Period Requested: August 16, 2025 - May 15, 2026

Purpose of Leave: Examine how institutional distrust and climate fears underpin the process by which most Democrats support suspending democracy to address climate change. This research will result in a book prospectus.

16. **Elizabeth Canning**

Department of Psychology

Leave Period Requested: August 16, 2025 - May 15, 2026

Purpose of Leave: Synthesize several mixed-methods data sources to provide empirical support for a theoretical model of growth mindset classroom culture that includes (a) teachers' intentions for their classroom culture, (b) teachers' implementation of the culture, and (c) students' interpretation of the culture.

17. **Andra Chastain**

Department of History

Leave Period Requested: August 16, 2025 - May 15, 2026

Purpose of Leave: Examine how public awareness of air pollution emerged in Mexico City (1950–2000). Drawing on qualitative primary sources, this research will be the basis of a book on the history of air pollution in the Americas with case studies of Los Angeles, Mexico City, and Santiago.

18. **Tanya Cheeke**

School of Biological Sciences

Leave Period Requested: August 16, 2025 - May 15, 2026

Purpose of Leave: In collaboration with Utah Valley University, examine new analytical and modeling techniques, including network analysis, to understand how microbiome community structure influences plant traits and ecosystem recovery after disturbance. Skills gained will underlie two papers, an NSF grant proposal, and modules for at least two WSU classes.

19. **Erica Crespi**
School of Biological Sciences
Leave Period Requested: January 1 - May 15, 2026
Purpose of Leave: Explore adaptations that amphibian embryos evolved to survive exposure to high salt concentrations, as global biodiversity is threatened by human-induced increasing salinity of freshwaters; coalesce an international community of interdisciplinary scientists and conservation partners to build capacity and strengthen the mission of advancing this research.

20. **Chris Dickey**
School of Music
Leave Period Requested: August 16 - December 31, 2025
Purpose of Leave: Record an album featuring premiere recordings of works for tuba and piano by American composers. The album will showcase diverse composers and styles and will serve as the definitive recording of these new compositions for tubists around the world. A recital tour throughout the West is also included.

21. **Colin Grier**
Department of Anthropology
Leave Period Requested: August 16, 2025 - May 15, 2026
Purpose of Leave: First, advance the application of geophysical and remote sensing technologies in archaeology. Second, refine strategies for utilizing these technologies in the search for unmarked graves of missing children at Indian Residential/Boarding Schools in Canada and the USA.

22. **Xiaofeng Guo**
Department of Chemistry
Leave Period Requested: August 16 - December 31, 2025
Purpose of Leave: Conduct a collaborative research project that will be performed at IEK-9 at Forschungszentrum Jülich GmbH (Jülich) and Karlsruher Institut für Technologie (KIT) on chemistry and thermodynamics of the mixing effects of elements in ceramics.

23. **John Harrison**
School of the Environment
Leave Period Requested: August 16, 2025 - May 15, 2026
Purpose of Leave: Make significant and accelerated headway with existing, funded research projects. Develop exciting new, fundable avenues for inquiry. Specific deliverables from these activities will include: a completed estimate of marine-derived nutrient inputs to coastal surface waters in support of an Index of Coastal Eutrophication Potential (ICEP), an indicator used to evaluate progress toward the achievement of UN Sustainability Goal 14 (the sustainable use and conservation of the oceans, seas, and marine resources), 1 submitted proposal for research funding, and 1-3 published, peer-reviewed papers.

24. **Lawrence Hatter**

Department of History

Leave Period Requested: August 16 - December 31, 2025

Purpose of Leave: Conduct archival research at the UK national archives and the Clements Library at the University of Michigan as part of the book project "The Long Road from Yorktown: Ending the Revolutionary War."

25. **Shawna Herzog***

Department of History

Leave Period Requested: August 16 - December 31, 2025

Purpose of Leave: Bring ArcGIS to WSU History students, giving them new digital tools with which to research and write about History. Complete Harvard's online GIS Institute, then develop methods courses for Pullman and global students that teach these fresh skills while highlighting global and local connections in their research.

26. **LeeAnn Hunter***

Department of English

Leave Period Requested: January 1 - May 15, 2026

Purpose of Leave: Develop three new courses in the health humanities to: 1) provide health and wellness support-particularly in mental health-to current students; 2) support students in their professional journey in health and wellness fields; and 3) build the foundation for a health humanities certificate at WSU.

27. **Abhishek Kaul**

Department of Mathematics and Statistics

Leave Period Requested: August 16, 2025 - May 15, 2026

Purpose of Leave: To study statistical inference in high dimensional non-stationary models and its connections of boosted regression trees. Concurrently, to develop and deploy statistical models in two distinct contexts, first, for large-scale climate modeling and second for spatiotemporal modeling of Per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) and their relationship to changes in land use in the continental United States.

28. **Thabiti Lewis**

Department of English

Leave Period Requested: August 16, 2025 - May 15, 2026

Purpose of Leave: Complete an edited book (Chicago and the Black Arts Movement: A Reader) that examines writers, institutions, visual artists, dramatists, intellectuals, musicians, publishers, and organizations situated in Chicago that represented a matrix of the Black Arts Movement (BAM) moment. The study examines Chicago as an important cityscape whose impact on BAM was national. Also, to complete work as a section editor for The History of the African American Novel (there are ten sections) published by Cambridge University Press, focusing on literature from 1955 to 1970.

29. **Xinmin Liu**
School of Languages, Cultures, and Race
Leave Period Requested: January 1 - May 15, 2026
Purpose of Leave: To finish the writing of the final two chapters of the monograph entitled "Rekindling the Ecological Imaginary With China's Agrarian Heritages", and complete the editing of the entire manuscript in preparation for publication by August 2026. Conduct archival research at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., and a research field trip to Chengdu, Sichuan (aka Eastern Tibet).
30. **Sheng-Chi Liu**
Department of Mathematics and Statistics
Leave Period Requested: August 16, 2025 - May 15, 2026
Purpose of Leave: Visit the National Center of the Theoretical Sciences in Taiwan to work on the nonvanishing of L-functions associated with Hilbert modular forms and their applications.
31. **Samantha Noll**
School of Politics, Philosophy, and Public Affairs
Leave Period Requested: January 1 - May 15, 2026
Purpose of Leave: Complete a book project at San Diego State University, examining the ethical implications of artificial intelligence (AI) and agriculture. Additionally, develop a podcast that explores the dangers and opportunities of emerging technologies.
32. **Iolanda Palmer**
Department of Art
Leave Period Requested: August 16, 2025 - May 15, 2026
Purpose of Leave: Focus on refining the creative process, building a national reputation, and further developing the public art initiative that began several years ago. These efforts enhance both student learning and community engagement. Create work in Pullman studio for various exhibitions across the United States.
33. **Sue Peabody**
Department of History
Leave Period Requested: August 16, 2025 - May 15, 2026
Purpose of Leave: Complete a visiting scholar residency at the University of Virginia for the grand opening of a museum exhibit; complete the production of a forthcoming graphic history memoir for publication; and draft a book proposal and two polished chapters and submit to presses.
34. **Eric Roalson**
School of Biological Sciences
Leave Period Requested: August 16, 2025 - May 15, 2026
Purpose of Leave: Prepare a book for publication, describing the diversity of the plant family Cleomaceae world-wide; a culmination of previous work on the classification and diversification of the family.

35. **Nishant Shahani**

Department of English

Leave Period Requested: August 16, 2025 - May 15, 2026

Purpose of Leave: Conduct archival research based on the premise that pandemics are not just epidemiological but also ideological. Theorized in relation to the political economy of Hindu nationalism, the project is tentatively entitled "Threading of Crises: Pandemic Genealogies in Hindutva."

36. **Deepti Singh**

School of the Environment

Leave Period Requested: August 16, 2025 - May 15, 2026

Purpose of Leave: Develop new research at the intersection of climate-health; learn a new research tool – variable-resolution climate modeling for future research on extremes; contribute to the Sixth US National Climate Assessment and a National Academies Report.

37. **Matt Stichter**

School of Politics, Philosophy, and Public Affairs

Leave Period Requested: August 16, 2025 - May 15, 2026

Purpose of Leave: Publish articles on "Emotional Self-Knowledge" to ethics; draft a book on moral psychology which incorporates this research on emotion.

38. **Nikolay Strigul**

Department of Mathematics and Statistics

Leave Period Requested: August 16, 2025 - May 15, 2026

Purpose of Leave: The focus of this research is modeling and understanding forests as complex self-organizing systems at a continental scale; compare disturbance patterns and the factors influencing forest dynamics across Europe and North America.

39. **Xueying Wang**

Department of Mathematics and Statistics

Leave Period Requested: August 16, 2025 - May 15, 2026

Purpose of Leave: Develop innovative infectious disease modeling frameworks integrating human behavior, focusing on advancing COVID-19 and other disease modeling through cutting-edge techniques and data analysis, with the goal of improving public health strategies.

40. **Dale Willits**

Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology

Leave Period Requested: August 16, 2025 - May 15, 2026

Purpose of Leave: Complete a study funded by the Washington Traffic Safety Commission to explore perceptions and the effectiveness of the ARIDE program in Washington State. The ARIDE program provides advanced training to law enforcement officers to more accurately detect driver impairment by alcohol and other drugs.

College of Education

41. Andy Cavagnetto

Department of Teaching and Learning and School of Biological Sciences

Leave Period Requested: August 16, 2025 - May 15, 2026

Purpose of Leave: The project will build off previous work to advance both theoretical and practical aspects of argumentation-to-learn; develop a course and book proposal focused on argumentation-to-learn.

42. Chris Connolly

Department of Kinesiology and Educational Psychology

Leave Period Requested: August 16 - December 31, 2025

Purpose of Leave: Develop a centralized dashboard for medical data collection to be used by all Ironman Triathlon races globally to prevent death and serious injury. Additionally, create the Triathlon Research Coalition to support high-impact research on triathlete safety and performance.

Edward R. Murrow College of Communication

43. Paul Bolls

Department of Strategic Communication

Leave Period Requested: August 16 - December 31, 2025

Purpose of Leave: Develop a theoretical model (The Embodied Model of Content Tailoring), and develop an edited book that advances the paradigm of media psychophysiology.

Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine

44. Lauren Thompson

Department of Speech and Hearing Sciences

Leave Period Requested: August 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026

Purpose of Leave: Validate a comprehensive framework to measure communication from individuals with complex neurodevelopmental disorders and limited speech.

Libraries

45. Erin Hvizdak

Libraries

Leave Period Requested: July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026

Purpose of Leave: Conduct research for a book exploring how the provenance of portraits of people of color in historical New Orleans reveals insights into wealth, status and identity in the U.S. South (1830-1940); revise and submit an article and draft a book chapter and proposal.

Voiland College of Engineering and Architecture

46. Nandita Biswas*

School of Mechanical and Materials Engineering

Leave Period Requested: January 1 - May 15, 2026

Purpose of Leave: Research the integration of lean principles in mechanical engineering design courses. This integration will emphasize student engagement, project management, hand-on-learning, and skill development to boost retention rate and foster sense of belonging.

47. Indranil Chowdhury

Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering

Leave Period Requested: August 16, 2025 - May 15, 2026

Purpose of Leave: Investigate the environmental implications and applications of artificial intelligence and machine learning on water sustainability in data centers.

48. Alla Kostyukova

Voiland School of Chemical Engineering and Bioengineering

Leave Period Requested: August 16 - December 31, 2025

Purpose of Leave: Learn modern methods of computational structural biology. Using these innovative techniques, identify binding sites in several proteins to determine reliability.

49. Taiji Miyasaka

School of Design and Construction

Leave Period Requested: August 16, 2025 - May 15, 2026

Purpose of Leave: Advance Drywall Waste Technology toward commercialization through materials testing and professional collaboration; write a book draft exploring the cultural-historical and perceptual significance of light.

50. Kishor Shrestha

School of Design and Construction

Leave Period Requested: January 1 - May 15, 2026

Purpose of Leave: Complete an AI/ Machine Learning (ML) course to advance to hone skills and develop competitive proposals.

51. Katie Zhong

School of Mechanical and Materials Engineering

Leave Period Requested: January 1 - May 15, 2026

Purpose of Leave: Advance research in green recycling of commercial batteries, fabrication of recyclable batteries, and interfacial engineering via applying natural proteins for advancing performance of nanocomposites.

Retraining Leave 2025 – 2026
March 2025

T. Chris Riley-Tillman, Provost and Executive Vice President, reports that he has approved the retraining leave listed below and that there will be no additional costs to the University for this program.

1. **Stephen Bramwell**

Extension - Agriculture and Natural Resources Program Unit

Leave Period Requested: July 1 - October 31, 2025

Purpose of Leave: Pastures and grasslands are crucially important landscapes, yet are overlooked by society. Increase Extension capacity in regional pastureland management, study conservation-based grassland management practices in an exemplary region, and design a training course to transmit conservation grazing knowledge to farming communities in western Washington.