

# Sabbatical Leaves: Peer panel discussion

Academic Assembly Welfare and Benefits Committee

**July 14, 2025 | Presented by**

- Daniel Obrist, Vice Provost of Academic Personnel and Development
- Tina Jordan, Interim Academic Personnel Director
- Ben Faber, Soils/Water/Subtropical Crops Advisor
- Mae Culumber, Nut Crops Farm Advisor
- George Zhuang, Viticulture Farm Advisor

# Academic Assembly

The mission of the **Academic Assembly** is to address the professional needs of UC ANR academic employees and provide a forum to enhance the impacts of UC ANR programs.

- Advise and assist the UC ANR administration in maximizing Cooperative Extension's usefulness to the UC and the people of California.
- Study, develop, and recommend policies and procedures for the benefit and welfare of academic employees of UC ANR.
- Promote communication between and within UC ANR and UC.

→ **Today's webinar organized by the Welfare and Benefits Committee.**

We are a standing committee responsible for review and input on UC rights and benefits of academic appointments. Pursue with administration means to improve, clarify, add, or modify the benefits and privileges of the Academic Assembly.

# Policies and procedures Approval flow and timeline

Daniel Obrist, Vice Provost of Academic Personnel and Development

Tina Jordan, Interim Academic Personnel Director

# Sabbatical Leave Policies and Resources

- UC ANR Sabbatical Leave Guidelines: <https://ucanr.edu/sites/default/files/2024-03/372096.pdf>
- UC APM 740: BENEFITS AND PRIVILEGES APM – 740: Leaves of Absence/Sabbatical Leaves: [https://ucop.edu/academic-personnel-programs/\\_files/apm/apm-740.pdf](https://ucop.edu/academic-personnel-programs/_files/apm/apm-740.pdf)

# How to report your outputs/outcomes/impacts

- UC ANR Guidelines: Individuals are required to submit a report identifying the results of the project(s) .....within 90-days after returning from sabbatical leave.
  - UC APM: The report shall become a part of the supporting materials submitted with any proposal for subsequent promotion or merit increase when the period of review includes the period of sabbatical leave.
  - eBook: VI. Sabbatical Leave Plan and/or Report (if applicable): The report shall become a part of the supporting materials submitted with any proposal for subsequent promotion or merit increase (APM-740) and contribute to the evaluation of academic advancement requests when the review period includes the period of sabbatical leave.
- **Your sabbatical leave outputs/outcomes/impacts will fully count towards your academic evaluation period. Most activities may fall within your professional competence and research section in your PR dossier.**

# Sabbatical Leave Eligibility

The following academic titles are eligible to accrue sabbatical leave credit:

- Cooperative Extension Advisors
- Specialist in Cooperative Extension

# Sabbatical Leave Accruals

- Eligible appointees accrue (4) sabbatical credits per year (July 1st – June 30th) or (1) credit per quarter.
- The maximum number of credits an academic can accrue is (40).

Sabbatical credit is not accrued during a period of:

- sabbatical leave
- any leave of absence without pay

# Sabbatical Leave Application Process

- The proposal and sabbatical leave form should go to your Director(s) and/or immediate supervisor for review and consensus.
- Usually, a sabbatical leave application is at least 3 pages in length and describes the purpose, planned sabbatical leave activities, anticipated results, outputs such as publications, and how the sabbatical leave enhances skills and professional competence.
- [Sabbatical Leave Request Form](#)
- [Sabbatical Leave Proposal](#) (Simple Template)



# Sabbatical Leave Application Timeline

- Academics are encouraged to begin planning for sabbatical leave **at least a year or more in advance** to allow time for the review and approval process.
- Sabbatical proposals are expected to be submitted at least **six months** prior to the requested start date.
- Proposals not submitted in a timely manner are at risk of not being approved. Applications submitted less than **three months prior** to the requested start date will not be considered.

# Sabbatical Leave Restrictions

- Sabbatical leave shall not be granted to an individual that will not be reappointed.
- Individuals that are planning to retire immediately following requested leave shall not be approved.
- Failure to return to regular duties for a period equal to time spent on sabbatical leave could create an obligation to refund the entire salary received while on leave.

# How to make your case

- UC ANR Guidelines: Describe how the sabbatical leave enhances the candidate's professional competence and academic program; clearly describe how proposed activities are distinct from normal work activities (academics are not expected to conduct normal work activities).
  - UC APM 740: Sabbatical leaves are not granted as a matter of individual right. Leaves are accorded to individuals in good standing to enable them to further their research or other creative activities and in doing so, to enhance their service to the University.
- **Most important: make a good case of how the proposed activities enhance your professional competence and further your research or other creative activities.**

# Specific activities/project information

- UC ANR Guidelines: ANR Guidelines: provide detailed description of proposed research activities, methods, anticipated results, outcomes, impacts, and expected publications (if applicable).
  - UC APM: A brief history of the project, from inception through progress to date and projection as to completion date. This history shall include a description of the applicant's preparation and any significant contributions already made in the field of activity with which the project is concerned. b. Significance of the project as a contribution to knowledge, to art, to a particular profession, or as an expected contribution to the applicant's increased effectiveness as a teacher and scholar.
- **Be specific about your project and/or proposed activities, including background, methodology, anticipated results, and deliverables (presentations, proposals, publications, etc.)**

# Specific information on visits and contacts

- UC ANR Guidelines: Sabbatical leave proposal must include the following:  
.....anticipated beginning, and end dates, sabbatical leave location, assurances of cooperation or authorization to conduct the project from appropriate individuals and/or institution.
- UC APM: The application form shall be accompanied by a statement providing in detail the following information:.....c. Name(s) of the location(s) or institution(s) where the project will be carried out, and the names of colleagues, if any, with whom it will be conducted. d. Assurances of cooperation, or authorization to conduct the project, received from individuals, institutions, or agencies.
- → **Be specific about locations to visit (University or research institute, contact information of visiting Professors/PIs, etc.); provide letters of invitation/collaborations and/or email confirmations for planned visits.**

# How to make a good case

**UC ANR Guidelines:** Describe how the sabbatical leave enhances the candidate's professional competence and academic program; clearly describe how proposed activities are distinct from normal work activities (academics are not expected to conduct normal work activities).

**UC APM 740:** Sabbatical leaves are not granted as a matter of individual right. Leaves are accorded to individuals in good standing to enable them to further their research or other creative activities and in doing so, to enhance their service to the University.

**Most importantly, make a good case of how the proposed activities enhance your professional competence and further your research or other creative activities.**

# Be specific about proposed activities and project information

UC ANR Guidelines: ANR Guidelines: provide detailed description of proposed research activities, methods, anticipated results, outcomes, impacts, and expected publications (if applicable).

UC APM: A brief history of the project, from inception through progress to date and projection as to completion date. This history shall include a description of the applicant's preparation and any significant contributions already made in the field of activity with which the project is concerned. b. Significance of the project as a contribution to knowledge, to art, to a particular profession, or as an expected contribution to the applicant's increased effectiveness as a teacher and scholar.

**Be specific about your project and/or proposed activities, including background, methodology, anticipated results, and deliverables (presentations, proposals, publications, etc.)**

# Provide information and support letters on proposed visits and collaborations

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UC APM: The application form shall be accompanied by a statement providing in detail the following information:.....c. Name(s) of the location(s) or institution(s) where the project will be carried out, and the names of colleagues, if any, with whom it will be conducted. d. Assurances of cooperation, or authorization to conduct the project, received from individuals, institutions, or agencies.

**Be specific about locations to visit (University or research institute, contact information of visiting Professors/PIs, etc.); provide letters of invitation/collaborations for collaborations and visits.**



# Report your outputs, outcomes, and impacts

UC ANR Guidelines: Individuals are required to submit a report identifying the results of the project(s) .....within 90-days after returning from sabbatical leave.

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**Your sabbatical leave outputs/outcomes/impacts will count towards your academic evaluation period. Most activities may fall within your professional competence and research section in your PR dossier.**

# Peer Examples

Ben Faber, Soils/Water/Subtropical Crops Advisor

Mae Culumber, Nut Crops Farm Advisor

George Zhuang, Viticulture Farm Advisor

# Ben Faber, Soils/Water/Subtropical Crops Advisor



New Zealand – 10/1999-  
9/2000

Hort Research – Te Puke



Avocado Root Rot



New Crops -  
Feijoa



ET Demand Effect on  
Hills

Adana, Turkey- 7/2009-6/2010  
Cukurova University



Figs



Mulberries



Pomegranates

- In both cases there is no Extension and I ended up doing a lot of grower talks supported by local groups and got financial support to do research in each country.
- A good way to get to know local culture.
- Office and Lab space provided by institutions.
- Labor provided for research at each institution.
- Publications resulted from each sabbatical

- Be Prepared:
  - Make your contacts early
- It takes about a year to disentangle yourself from current research and obligations
- It takes about a year to reengage in your old position and  
Things will have changed
- Especially YOU
- ENJOY the trip

# Mae Culumber, Nut Crops Farm Advisor

6 month stay at home sabbatical



# Conventional disposal: burning and co-generation plants



Photo credits: Zuber and Holtz

California SB-705 mandated the phase-out of agricultural burning in SJV by January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025 and most co-generation plants no longer process agricultural waste

# Conventional disposal: burning and co-generation plants



Photo credits: Zuber and Holtz

Most all accumulated plant biomass carbon is lost as  $\text{CO}_2$  when burned, which could otherwise increase organic matter in agricultural soils

# Whole orchard recycling (WOR) and vineyard recycling is an agricultural waste disposal alternative



Photo credits: Holtz

~98,743 hectares and 6.6 million metric tons of orchard and vineyard biomass chipped and incorporated statewide since 2018



**Can this organic matter be returned to the soil without negative impact on the next crop?**

**How fast do wood chips decompose?**


**How much remains in the soil as long-term carbon storage?**



# Positives

Sabbatical allowed me to focus on analysis and summarization of 6 years of GHG and soil parameter data that culminated in a publication this year

Would not have been possible with normal work schedule

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## Impact of whole orchard recycling on greenhouse gas emissions, soil carbon storage, and almond productivity in a replanted orchard

[Catherine Mae Culumber](#)<sup>a</sup>  , [Suduan Gao](#)<sup>b</sup>, [Touyee Thao](#)<sup>b</sup>, [Amisha Poret-Peterson](#)<sup>c</sup>, [Cameron Zuber](#)<sup>d</sup>, [Diana Camarena-Onofre](#)<sup>a</sup>, [Julio Perez](#)<sup>b</sup>, [Aileen Hendratna](#)<sup>b</sup>, [Brent A. Holtz](#)<sup>e</sup>


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<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.agee.2025.109664>

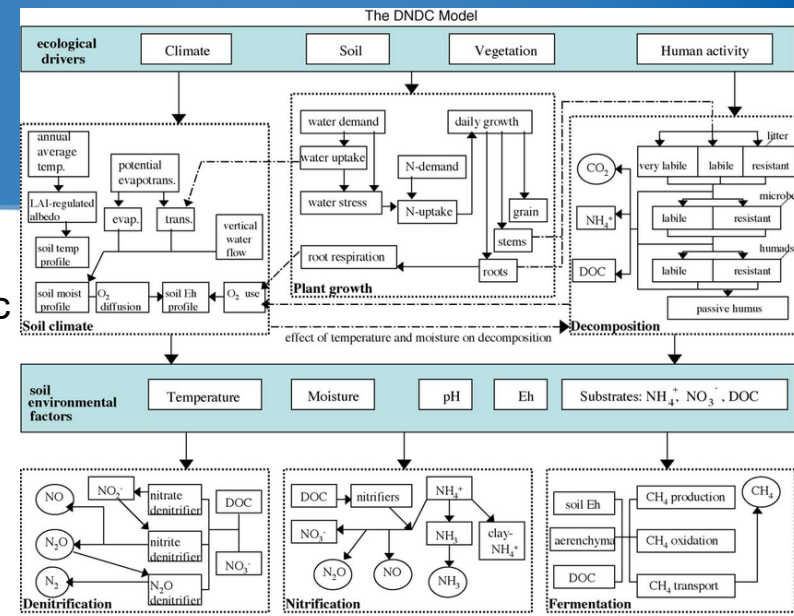
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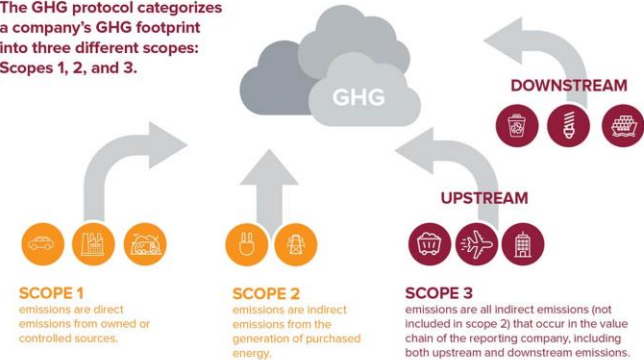
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# Negatives

- Original plan was to develop an understanding of DNDC model processing and validation using WOR site-specific dataset, for regulatory compliance and marketing consortiums
- Hurdles with license agreement with software company for data sharing slowed progress
- Ambitious goal for a 6 month sabbatical
- When writing plan be realistic with what you can do with the time and resources allotted



The GHG protocol categorizes a company's GHG footprint into three different scopes: Scopes 1, 2, and 3.





# Visit to Curico and Chilean

- Invited lecture at Universidad de Concepción for graduate level agronomy class:  
“Whole Orchard Recycling: Promises and limitations”
- Invited lecture at the International Seminar Program - an agriculture industry workshop  
“Interpreting Water Test Results for Micro-Irrigation”
- Field meetings with growers, microirrigation supply factory, and an irrigation control agency



# Visited Ñuble River Joint Board of Control: a water users' organization

Projects to improve water management systems (e.g. canals and automated gates) and increase water efficiency





# Rio Nuble and La Punilla Reservoir

Approved for construction for hydropower, flood control, and improved irrigation management



# George Zhuang, Viticulture Farm Advisor

# Plant Pathology PhD at UC Riverside

**10/2023-06/2024**

- Background:

- ✓ 60-70% of farm calls are related to pest and disease.
- ✓ Trained as plant physiologist.

- Goal:

- ✓ Gain expertise on vine disease management.
- ✓ Expand research network and grant opportunities.
- ✓ Enhance education background through a PhD.

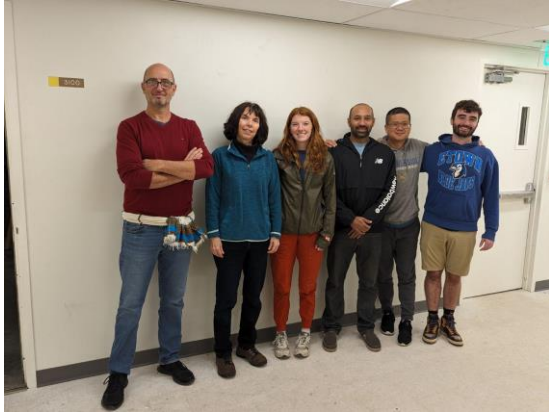


# Outreach and Action Plan

- Outreach
  - ✓ Secure grant to work on bio-control.
  - ✓ Contact collaborator and apply for graduate school.
- Submit sabbatical leave plan and discuss with CD.
- Find housing, complete paperwork (insurance, etc.).
- Enroll in classes.



# Class/Travel/Field Work



# Why Should You Do It?

- Build expertise.
- Expand network.
- Identify untapped research, extension, and grant opportunities.



# Is Sabbatical Leave Worth It?

- Absolutely!
- One of the rare benefits compared to private industry and some other university extensions.
- Key:
  - ✓ Understand your goal
  - ✓ Secure funding
  - ✓ Enjoy!

# Questions for all Panelists

 **UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA**  
Agriculture and Natural Resources



# Future Activities

- Have ideas for other topics? Fill out the poll or add them to the chat