

**University of Houston**  
**Faculty Development Leave Applications**  
Board of Regents Meeting  
November 2025

Faculty Name	College	Department	Faculty Title	Term	Pay (full/1/2)	Leave Reason
Conra Gist	College of Education	Curriculum and Instruction	Professor	Calendar Yr 2026	Half Pay	To shift research focus from studying grow your own program designs in general, to now begin investigating more specifically, the creation of restorative educator development and practitioner networks that better equip and sustain future and current educators.
Praveen Bollini	College of Engineering	Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering	Associate Professor	Spring 2026	Full Pay	Develop international collaborations with prominent faculty at ETH Zurich, expanding research efforts in chemical looping natural gas conversation and CO2 capture.
Monit Cheung	Social Work		Professor	Spring 2026	Full Pay	Engage in a project entitled “Integrating Evidence from Evaluating Guided Imagery Interactive Website into Clinical Practice.” Outcomes will include: 1) posting an innovative method to engage children with special needs in an interactive website with 50 bilingual guided imagery (GI) audio files; 2) completing the website design with an evaluation component for professionals’ input; 3) completing a GI user manual for professionals with procedures and evaluation data for supporting a research/training grant on child and family interventions
Julie Derges	College of the Arts	Moores School of Music	Associate Professor	Fall 2026	Full Pay	Expand research areas to focus on music teacher preparation and certification focusing on three subtopics: elementary music teacher transition, elementary music teacher longevity, and the relevance of undergraduate coursework in current job requirements for elementary school music teachers.
Ji Yeon Lee	College of the Arts	Moores School of Music	Associate Professor	Fall 2026	Full Pay	Work on a book project based on her long-standing research on Korean diaspora composers, focusing on three generations of post-war Korean Composers.
Rex Koontz	College of the Arts	School of Art	Professor	Fall 2026	Full Pay	Complete a large portion of a current book project in art history titled <i>Constructing an Art History for Texas: Art Exhibition Narratives at the Texas State Fair in the 1930s</i> .
Joshua Unikel	College of the Arts	School of Art	Associate Professor	Academic Year 26-27	Half Pay	Complete two major scholarly projects on the exterminated Cretan Jewish community during WWII. The first is a book, <i>Tanais: Biography of a Ship Sunk in the Archive</i> . The second, <i>Evidenc</i> , is a body of visual work—including prints and a book that engages with themes of loss, memory, and genocide.