Procedure Title: Staff Professional Development

Impact: All Benefit-Eligible, Non-Faculty Employees

Responsibility: Human Resources

Effective Date: 4/25/2001

Last Update: 1/30/2020

Relates to Policy (s): 3.10

Legal Citation(s):

I. Eligible Participants

Non-faculty employees in benefit-eligible positions who have been employed continuously for one year or more are able to apply for funds. Employees working for grant-funded programs are not eligible.

II. Professional Development Plan (PDP)

The intent of the Professional Development Plan is to encourage the systematic planning of professional goals. The plan may include funded and non-funded activities.

A. Non-Funded Activities:

Activities improving job performance that do not require financial assistance.

B. Funded Activities:

Job-related credit and non-credit classes, conferences, workshops, seminars, and relevant professional certifications. Professional journal subscriptions and/or membership in professional organizations do not qualify for professional development funds.

Participants develop a Professional Development Plan using the PDP form. Once the supervisor approves the plan, the supervisor submits it to the appropriate president's cabinet member for approval. The PDP may be updated and modified throughout the two-year funding cycle. At the end of two years, participants may begin a new funding cycle and a new professional development plan.

III. Financial Assistance for Professional Development

As an indication of its commitment to professional development, the college may provide financial assistance of up to $750 per eligible employee for each two-year funding cycle. Increases to the amount of financial assistance will be dependent on availability of program fund allocation. The funds are not part of a participant's salary and may be accessed only through completed, approved PDP and PDP Request for Funds forms.

For each applicant whose Professional Development Plan is approved, funds will be available until the yearly fund is depleted. Eligible employees may use their funds in part or in whole any time during their two-year cycle. Each funding cycle will begin on the first day of the month in which the application is completed and end two years later. The college may rescind all funding with the approval of the board of trustees.

The institution agrees to allocate a minimum of $16,000 per year to the program. This funding is not intended to supplant normal departmental professional development funds.

Should all funds authorized during any given year not be used, the Staff Assembly Executive Committee, with a representative from Human Resources, may use and/or encumber those funds for projects appropriate for staff professional development.

IV.   Professional Development Plan Process

The applicant's two-year funding cycle begins after the supervisor and the president's cabinet member have approved the PDP Request for Funds and the Professional Development Plan and the Request for Funds forms are forwarded to the Human Resources Department for verification of fund availability.

Once the Professional Development Plan is approved and funds verified, the applicant may request funds by completing a PDP Funds Request form. The PDP Funds Request form may be submitted at any time during the fiscal year the activity occurs.

For approved tuition/fee expenses, certification programs, etc., reimbursement requests should be submitted at the time payments are made. For travel requests, reimbursements are made once travel is completed.

If funds are available and receipts/substantiation documents have been submitted to the Human Resource Department, the reimbursement request will be completed by Human Resources and forwarded to the Office of Finance and Business for processing.

A copy of the Professional Development Plan and PDP Request for Funds forms will be maintained in the Human Resources department.

V. Verification of Activity Completion

Upon completion of the funded professional development activity, the participant must submit documentation that verifies completion to their supervisor. Documentation for verification depends upon the type of activity; such as:

1. For credit classes: official transcript or grade report.

2. For conferences, workshops and seminars: a copy of the information brochure, and a brief synopsis of what was learned and how it will improve job performance.

3. For professional certification: a copy of the certificate.

4. For non-credit classes: a grade report or other document verifying satisfactory course completion.

Although not required, employees may opt to also send copies of transcripts or certifications to Human Resources to be included in their personnel file as documentation for Professional Skills.