6.1 Faculty-Staff Professional Development and Travel

Prelude
Professional development is essential to faculty research, scholarship, and creative activities. Each academic year, the director must strive to allocate a portion of the SDC Budget towards this end. This policy outlines the process of requesting funds for professional development and travel.

I. Purpose, scope, and decisions: The range of what constitutes "professional development" varies widely from discipline to discipline (and individual to individual). Most frequently, however, professional development refers to the delivery of refereed papers, presentations, projects, and posters at conferences and meetings. Requests for funding should be accompanied by a documented outcome or deliverable—or the promise of such—that will accentuate the faculty member's research, scholarship, and/or creative activities.

Principal authority for determining the relative value of professional development requests will reside with program heads, for program heads should be closer to understanding the value of and relative worth of professional development opportunities in their disciplines. The director should be kept informed of professional development and travel amongst the faculty, but should respect the decisions of program heads in this matter. The director reserves the right to deny funding should financial considerations merit such a decision.

II. Annual allocation: Upon discretion of the director, each faculty member will be provided an annual allocation for professional development and travel. This allocation, which may vary from year to year depending upon budget availability, will be spread equally amongst the faculty, and should be announced by the director at the first faculty meeting of the academic year (typically in late August).[1] Because allocations are distributed from the state budgets (SDC Budget), the annual allocations will follow the fiscal year calendar (July 1 to June 30). Professional development and travel fund requests that exceed the annual allocation may be granted by program heads from annual program allocations or other sources of funding (e.g., excellence funds) over which they have been granted disbursement authority, but otherwise must be absorbed by the individual faculty member either through extramural funding (e.g., grants or fellowships) or "out of pocket." Unused funds will not carry forward into the next fiscal year. Unused funds are not able to be "transferred" to another person.

While every effort should be made to complete travel within the fiscal year the allocation is made (July 1 – June 30), summer can provide opportunities for travel not allowed during the busy academic year, and faculty or staff may find that they have not used all of their annual allocation. If faculty members wish to travel in the month of July and have expenses count toward the previous fiscal year's allocation, every effort to communicate this information should be made to the Director

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[1] Faculty with travel budgets included in their contracts or start-up packages will be expected to fund travel and professional development from those budgets. Faculty members with ½ time or other percentage appointments will be allotted a budget proportional to their percentages. Program heads will be allocated a budget equal to all other faculty, but must request release of funds through the director following the procedure outlined in this document.

and Administrative Manager by May 1. As much as possible, expenses should be pre-paid before July 1 to ensure accurate record keeping.

III. What's covered: Flights, hotels, ground transportation, ancillary events associated with the particular event (e.g., conference registration, tours, banquets, awards galas), and per diem for meals. Faculty will be provided a per diem commensurate with governmental per diem rates.

IV. Eligibility: All SDC faculty on annual appointments (or longer) are eligible for funds for professional development and travel, regardless of rank (all instructors, clinical faculty, tenure-track faculty, and tenured faculty are eligible). This includes those faculty on professional leave (sabbatical), unless grants have been awarded to specifically cover that travel. Professional development and/or travel for administrative professionals and classified staff (e.g., for training, workshops, or recruitment) will be funded through the SDC General and Administrative (G&A) Budget and must be approved by the director.

V. Funding priorities: Funding is most likely to be granted for peer-reviewed and/or juried conference presentations, poster presentations, exhibitions, and installations. Attendance at editorial board or advisory board meetings, workshops, short courses, and/or other professional training opportunities with a documented outcome or deliverable (or the promise of such) may be considered as well.

Attending conferences, trade shows, and/or exhibitions without a documented outcome or deliverable should be given lower priority than peer-reviewed abstracts or proposals accepted for presentation. Faculty requesting funding to attend conferences or other events (without presenting a paper) must provide, to the program head, a detailed explanation of the value of his/her attendance, as well as an explanation of how s/he plans to translate the attendance into productivity for research, teaching, and/or service. In these instances, program heads should look first to 17A monies to assist faculty attendance. It is expected that guest lectures and other invitations for presentation will be funded entirely by the host institution or company.

VI. Request process for acceptance:
1. Upon acceptance to a peer-reviewed conference or an exhibition, faculty members must notify their specific program head to obtain approval and release of funds. <u>When sending the request to their program head (this may be included in the body of an email, or as an attachment, or a separate letter/document), faculty members must include:</u>
    a. proof of acceptance
    b. dates you will be away and provisions you will make to cover your courses and other university responsibilities
    c. brief explanation of the nature/content of their presentation
    d. extent of involvement
    e. why this particular conference or organization is important to their professional development
    f. approximate costs

2. If approved by the program head, faculty must fill out a travel authority request through the administrative manager. This travel authority request will ask for travel dates, costs, and a "purpose/details" section permitting faculty to explain the importance of the event for

professional development. The program head's approval must accompany the travel authority when it is submitted to the administrative manager.

VII. Request process for attendance (no presentation)

1. Should faculty members wish to attend a conference, exhibition, or related event they deem vital for professional development (without presenting a paper or being officially involved in any other way), they must notify their specific program head to obtain approval and release of funds. <u>When sending the request to their program head (this may be included in the body of an email, or as an attachment, or a separate letter/document), faculty members must include:</u>
   a. a detailed explanation of the value of their attendance (why this particular conference or organization is important to their professional development)
   b. an explanation of how they plan to translate the attendance into productivity for research, teaching, and/or service.
   c. approximate costs

2. If approved by the program head, faculty must fill out a travel authority request through the administrative manager. This travel authority request will ask for travel dates, costs, and a "purpose/details" section permitting faculty to explain the importance of the event for professional development. The program head's approval must accompany the travel authority when it is submitted to the administrative manager.

VIII. SDC Staff Travel: The SDC highly encourages the professional development of its staff. Unless prior arrangement(s) have been made, staff members should request funding from their immediate supervisor and/or the director in a manner similar to VII, above. Priority shall be on the delivery of conference papers, but attendance at conferences may be permissible provided there is suitable justification and a deliverable outcome.

IX. Not covered as part of this policy:

1. Fundraising-related trips. These should be funded through program allocations.
2. Program-related development (e.g., travel for accreditation preparation). This should be funded through program allocations.
3. Course-related trips (e.g., studio site visits). These should be absorbed within course fees.
4. Faculty-led student experiences (e.g., study tours, student workshops, awards ceremonies). These should be absorbed within course fees or program allocations through program heads.
5. Computers, software, printers, maintenance, or other computer or IT-related equipment. These must be approved by the SDC director, and then requested through the computer systems administrator.
6. Individual memberships to professional organizations. These should be self-funded.
7. Individual journal subscriptions, magazines, and books. These should be self-funded.
8. Graduate student conference or workshop travel. This should be requested through program heads and emerge from program allocations. Priority will be given to accepted, peer-reviewed projects over attendance.

X. Review: This document should be reviewed annually by the SDC Leadership Team to ensure it is in line with funding allocations and school-wide initiatives.