

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

PURPOSE: To encourage employees to continue their professional growth.

POLICY: The University shall provide financial support and release time, whenever possible, for employees to pursue job-related professional development.

DATE APPROVED: July 7, 1999

REVISED: July 1, 2010; September 1, 2007

PRACTICES & PROCEDURES:

- I. Professional development includes but is not limited to the following:
 - A. Attendance at conferences, workshops, seminars, lectures, training sessions, and completing University course work.
 - B. Membership in professional affiliations and attendance at their organization meetings.
 - C. Community involvement that enhances the University's reputation or augments the employee's ability to perform their job.
- II. Employees may request release time and/or financial support from their supervisor.
 - A. Supervisors shall indicate to requesting employees the process they wish to be followed for obtaining final approval for professional development.
 - B. Financial support, whether it be payment for travel expenses, membership dues, tuition, or conference or seminar fees, shall be provided only when it has been included in the budget. Supervisors should make it clear to their staff that there may be a delay until budget planning commences for the approaching fiscal year, if previously allocated funds have already been expensed.
- III. If the department's budget permits, supervisors may recommend or require that their employee participate in some or all of the professional development endeavors listed in Section I. above.
 - A. If requested by the supervisor, employees shall be expected to participate in any or all of the professional development endeavors listed, and shall automatically be reimbursed for all expenses, including travel expenses, if any.
 - B. Non-exempt employees who are unable to participate when travel and/or attendance requires the use of non-work personal time shall not be penalized by their supervisor.
 - C. Non-exempt employees are entitled to be paid for all hours spent in travel to and from any such activity and time at the event, including over-time payments if warranted. Meal times and sleeping on over-night stays are not paid time, provided a minimum of eight (8) hours is paid for each normally scheduled work-day. Supervisors shall, in all such instances, consult with the Manager of Human Resources as these matters are subject to both Federal and State Wage and Hour laws.
 - D. All professional development expenses shall be charged to the departmental budget, using anyone or more of the appropriate line items (i.e., Professional Development, Membership Dues, Miscellaneous Travel, Conference Registration, and Conference Travel Expenses). Supervisors with questions should consult with the Accounting Manager.