Professional Development Funds

In 2011, Helena College redefined its mission statement and identified the following three core themes which outline key aspects of the college’s mission:

- Provide Access and Support: high quality opportunities to participate in educational activities and appropriate support
- Demonstrate Academic Excellence: high degree of quality in all programming
- Strengthen the Community: high level of response to community needs

A key objective of these themes is the development and strengthening of our employee’s knowledge, skills and engagement. The college’s 2012-22 Strategic Plan notes that “An excellent employee is one who contributes positively to the learning environment by continually developing and applying knowledge and skills, investing in student success, and performing his or her duties with dedication and creativity.” Accordingly, the college encourages professional development and provides significant funding resources to administrators, faculty, contract professionals, and staff members on an annual basis through a competitive application process. The following procedures for the application, awarding and reporting of professional development funds were adopted by the College Leadership Team effective July 1, 2008 and revised on November 1, 2011 and July 16, 2013.

Professional Development Funding Guidelines

1. Professional development is defined as the continuous process of acquiring new knowledge and skills that relate to one’s profession, job responsibilities, or work environment, regardless of job classification.
2. Professional development activities eligible for funding may include, but are not limited to, credit and non-credit courses, conferences, workshops, seminars, webinars, video or teleconferences, printed or audio-visual materials, making presentations, writing articles/publications, conducting research, and participation with associations, committees or councils related to an academic discipline, business & industry or higher education in general.
3. The professional development activity needs to relate directly to the applicant’s position or job classification and/or be of benefit the applicant’s department/program and must demonstrate alignment with one or more institutional core themes, strategic objectives, and program/departmental outcomes.
4. Funds are available to provide for the following costs: registration and/or training fees & tuition, transportation, lodging & meals. Other available funding sources must be identified.
5. The applicant is required to demonstrate how the training or information received will be shared with other staff & faculty who would benefit from it. This must occur in the same semester for which funding for the activity is received.
6. Memberships to professional associations are not eligible for professional development funding and should be included in program or departmental budgets; however, activities associated with such memberships may be eligible for funding. Membership costs may be included with an
application for funding if they reduce the overall cost for an event registration or any other eligible professional development activity.

7. Adjunct faculty are invited to apply for professional development funds. To be eligible for funding, adjuncts must demonstrate significant institutional experience and commitment by completing a minimum of two academic terms of service not to include summer sessions. The requested training must occur during a time period in which an adjunct is contracted for employment with the college or when a contract for future employment can be reasonably assured of being offered and accepted.

Application Process

1. Applicants must thoroughly complete a professional development application, provide documentation detailing the opportunity, a travel request/authorization form (RAT) if applicable, as well as an statement demonstrating how the activity will benefit the applicant, the applicant’s program/department, and alignment with the college’s mission, core themes, strategic goals, and applicable program or department outcomes.

2. Completed application forms must include signature from the appropriate immediate supervisor indicating review of and support for the application.

3. Completed forms are submitted to the Professional Development Committee for consideration. Applications will be evaluated for selection using a scored rubric.

4. Accepted proposals exceeding $1000 must also be reviewed/approved by the Leadership Team.

5. Applications must be submitted by the published deadline for the semester in which the requested activity will occur. Applications for summer activities should be submitted by the preceding spring semester deadline.

6. All applicants will be notified of the status of their application within 10 working days of the deadline.

Professional Development Committee

1. Membership
   a. Director of Human Resources
   b. One representative from Staff Senate
   c. One representative from Faculty Senate
   d. One contract professional

2. Reporting
   a. The committee reports to the College Leadership Team
   b. The designated committee chair will report the following information to campus on a semester basis
      i. A solicitation for applications to include the amount available for the semester and the deadline for submission.
iii. Following the semester deadline a report of the successful applications, requested activities, application scores & funding cut-off point, and the aggregate amount of funding awarded will be published. Individual award amounts will not be reported campus wide. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified of their status, application score and the cutoff point for funding.

iii. The amount of reserve funds available and the process and/or deadline for application submission will be disclosed following the initial application deadlines for each fiscal year.

Disbursement

1. The amount available for professional development each fiscal year will be recommended by the budget committee and approved by the College Leadership Team.

2. A set portion of the total available funding for the fiscal year will be set aside for 3 application periods each fiscal year. All eligible applications received by the applicable period deadline will be scored according to the established rubric and funds will be awarded according to the ranking of scores until the available funds for the period are expended. Any remaining funds will be rolled into the next consecutive funding period within the fiscal year.

3. Awarded applicants whose final expenditures exceed the approved amount due to failure to anticipate or include costs in their initial application that were necessary or reasonably expected will be responsible for the excess expenditure from the appropriate program or departmental budget associated with their position or area of responsibility. Changes in final expenditures due to uncontrollable or unanticipated circumstances are expected and will be accommodated (e.g. variations in airline fares, venue changes, etc.)
### Professional Development Application Scoring Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Points Possible</th>
<th>Points Earned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Application Materials</strong></td>
<td>Criteria Point Scale:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• All applicable items are completed</td>
<td>2=Exceeds criteria</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Information provided is clear and thorough</td>
<td>1=Meets criteria</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• All required documentation is included (application, statement, travel forms, information on event)</td>
<td>0=Does not meet criteria</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total of 0-2 possible points</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Proposed Activity</strong></td>
<td>Criteria Point Scale:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Activity meets the established definition of professional development</td>
<td>2=Exceeds criteria</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Activity is related directly to applicant’s position, job classification or area(s) of responsibility</td>
<td>1=Meets criteria</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Activity aligns with college mission and one or more core themes and strategic goals</td>
<td>0=Does not meet criteria</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Activity aligns with applicant’s program mission/outcomes</td>
<td>5 criteria x 2 points for a total of 0-10 possible points</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Activity will benefit applicant’s department or program as a whole</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Additional Factors</strong></td>
<td>Criteria Point Scale:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Applicant has never received funding for professional development activities</td>
<td>1 point for no prior PD funding</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Applicant has not received funding for professional development activities within the past fiscal year</td>
<td>1 point for no PD funding within past fiscal year</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Applicant has other funding resources to support activity and offset total cost of request</td>
<td>1 point for other funding resources</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total of 0-3 possible points</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
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Reviewer:  
Date of Review: 

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