

EMC Reviewed: November 18, 2014
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Board Approved: April 23, 2015 BM# 38: 2014-2015

NAME: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY

REFERENCES: Professional Development Procedures
Delegation of Authority

OBJECTIVES: Great Plains College values its employees and is committed to encouraging and assisting employees to participate in professional development and in-service activities that will maximize their performance in their existing positions or prepare them for new opportunities within the college.

DEFINITIONS: Professional Development (PD) – is training that is mutually agreed to by the employee and employer and is relevant to the employee’s current position or future career goals.

In-Service – is training that is identified and assigned by the college; in-service is directed toward the development of college staff to accomplish specific college objectives.

Long-Term Education – education whereby the funding application extends beyond one fiscal year; normally results in a professional designation or educational credential (eg: degree).

Short-Term Education – education whereby the funding application remains in one fiscal year; normally includes individual courses, conferences, seminars or workshops that provide specific training over a short period of time (less than one fiscal year).

Education Leave – a leave, without pay, for a predetermined period of time, granted to an employee for the purposes of full-time post-secondary studies.

NOTE: The College reserves the right to restrict the number of educational leaves granted in a fiscal year.

BUDGET: The budget for staff professional development and in-service training will be outlined and approved each fiscal year based on financial circumstances of the College. Every effort will be made to maximize the financial support offered through this program.

Special Project and Grant funding for professional development (e.g.: English Language Training) will be managed as a separate budget.

EMPLOYEE ELIGIBILITY: All permanent, in-scope employees, who are in active service, are eligible to access professional development and in-service financial assistance.



PERSONNEL

Probationary employees are not normally eligible for PD or In-service financial assistance unless prescribed by the college or outlined and approved in individual work plans.

Special Project/Grant funding employee eligibility will be outlined by the funding agency.

PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY:

Professional development and in-service initiatives must be designed to enhance the employee's knowledge in their existing position or prepare them for career advancement within the college.

NOTE: Attendance at professional association meetings or work-related committees are not considered professional development nor in-service.

Education and Training Priorities:

- a) PD applications submitted within the documented timelines
- b) In-service
- c) Ad hoc PD applications

EXPENDITURE ELIGIBILITY:

Staff are eligible to recover expenses up to a maximum of \$2,000 per employee per fiscal year for short- and long-term education.

Staff are eligible to recover expenses up to a maximum of \$5,000 per employee per fiscal year for education leaves.

In those cases where PD resources do not suffice to cover the cost of particularly expensive educational programs, such as online graduate degrees, the College may provide an interest free loan in accordance with the terms and conditions set out in the College's Education Loan Program guidelines.

Great Plains College will cover expenses associated with professional development and in-service events such as tuition, required course and material fees, transportation, meals and accommodation.

Financial Commitments

- Financial commitments for long-term education will only be made up to one fiscal year in advance of the current fiscal year.
- Financial assistance for part-time, permanent employees is pro-rated based on Full-Time Equivalency (FTE).
- Unused PD dollars will not be carried forward from one fiscal year to the next.

PERSONNEL

Other Financial Considerations

- Employees are responsible for:
 - o Costs incurred from an employee's decision to not attend an approved PD or in-service event.
 - o Costs incurred over and above approved amounts for PD and in-service
 - o Costs incurred for programs/courses which he/she did not successfully complete. For long-term education, financial support for future fiscal years will be dependent on successful completion of previous courses.

- Return for Service:
 - o An employee who is granted PD financial support for an education leave must agree to remain employed by the college for the equivalent of one full year for every \$5,000 received. This return for service period begins after completion of their leave. Should the employee leave prior to the end of this return for service period, he/she must repay the college for monies received, in proportion to the amount of time left. For example, if an employee who received \$5,000 in PD financial support leaves after six months, they will be required to pay back 50 percent of the monies received.

- Tax Consideration:
 - o According to CRA regulation, employees cannot claim the education amount if tuition fees are paid or reimbursed by the employer, union or other organization. Therefore, should you receive a T2202 from the educational institution and GPC has reimbursed you, you may only claim the portion of tuition fees that were not reimbursed by GPC.

Appeal

The college's professional development procedures outline the process for employees who want to appeal a declined PD request or recover expenses incurred as a result of a cancelled PD or in-service event.

HOURS OF WORK ELIGIBILITY:

Professional Development (PD)

- Courses will be taken on the employee's own time.
- Seminars, workshops and conferences will be employee paid time.

In-Service

- In-service events are employee paid time.

NOTE: Courses taken outside of regular working hours will be on the employee's own time.

PERSONNEL

- Professional development and in-service events that are considered 'employee paid time' will be paid to a maximum of:
 - Full time, union office staff = 7 hours/day
 - Full time, non-union office staff = 7.2 hours/day
 - Full time, field staff = 7.5 hours/day
 - Part time office and field = normal hours worked that specific day
 - Instructional staff = up to 8 faculty initiative days
 - Educational Assistant staff = up to 4 faculty initiative days

- Out-of-scope employees, who wish to attend an in-service event, may do so on their own time.
- Time spent at professional development and in-service events are not eligible for overtime consideration.