

ARTICLE 18
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Section 1. Purpose

The University is committed to the development of an academic community recognized for its achievement in contributing, transmitting and using knowledge and ideas. An essential means for the faculty periodically to enhance competence and widen professional activity is the Professional Development Leave (PDL) Program. The major purpose of this program is to promote the professional growth and new or renewed intellectual achievement of faculty. The intended outcome of a PDL is to increase individual effectiveness or produce academically or socially useful results. A PDL may entail specialized scholarly activity or be designed to provide broad cultural experience and enlarged perspective.

Section 2. Eligibility

- A. Any bargaining unit faculty member (tenure-track, tenured or non-tenure track) with at least seven (7) academic years of teaching service at the University, which may include periods of paid leaves of absence or temporary administrative duties (for example, chair or interim chair), may be granted a PDL for a period of not more than one (1) academic year to engage in further education, research, or any other activity approved by the Board. Additionally:
- B. If the faculty member shows that the project is better served by dividing the PDL over two (2) academic years, the split leave may be permitted at the discretion of the President and the Board provided that such an understanding is reached before the leave is approved.
- C. A PDL shall not be granted for the sole purpose of becoming self-employed or obtaining employment elsewhere. However, a PDL may be granted to acquire an advanced degree so long as pursuing the same is in the mutual interest of the University and the bargaining unit member.
- D. A faculty member may be considered for an off-cycle PDL under the following conditions:
 - 1. The faculty member must inform the academic unit chair/director of their intention to apply for funding that might be used to fund an off-cycle PDL, and must keep the chair/director apprised of the status of the funding opportunity.
 - 2. The faculty member must have completed at least six (6) semesters (three (3) academic years) of teaching service since a previous PDL before applying for an off-cycle PDL.

3. The external funding opportunity must provide funding for the faculty member's salary for the duration of the off-cycle PDL. The University shall give consideration to providing partial support to supplement that funding if it is not sufficient to meet the faculty member's base salary for the duration of the off-cycle PDL.
 4. In the case of a negative recommendation, the Provost or a Vice Provost shall provide the applicant with a written rationale for the denial. A negative recommendation is not grievable.
- E. A faculty member who has completed a PDL must complete another six (6) years of paid status at the University before becoming eligible for a PDL. Application for a subsequent PDL may be made after the completion of ten (10) semesters (5 academic years) of paid status at the University, with said PDL not to begin before the completion of twelve (12) semesters (6 academic years) of service at the University.
 - F. Professional leave taken as part of the faculty development program shall not be deemed to be in lieu of ongoing commitments in connection with a specific research, scholarly or creative program.

Section 3. Compensation

Compensation and other benefits paid to full-time faculty who are on professional leave will be handled as follows:

- A. The University shall pay the faculty member for or during a period of professional leave a salary not to exceed the amount that would have been paid to said faculty member for the performance of regular duties during the period of the leave. A faculty member shall receive not less than full pay for one (1) semester of PDL. If the PDL is for two (2) semesters, the faculty member will receive one half ($\frac{1}{2}$) compensation for the two (2) semesters. The salary paid for such leave may not be suitable for inclusion in a final average salary for retirement purposes, as determined by STRS.
- B. No faculty member shall, by virtue of being on professional leave, suffer a reduction or termination of regular employee retirement or insurance benefits or of any other benefit or privilege received as a faculty member at the University. Whenever such a benefit would be reduced because of a reduction in the faculty member's salary during the PDL, the faculty member shall be given a chance to have the benefit increased to its normal level.

- C. A person granted leave under the faculty development program will be considered as providing full-time service to the University during that period, and the University shall not pay any additional stipend or other compensation during such period of leave. Leaves may include funding by third (3rd) parties. Outside employment shall be governed by Article 24, Professional Activities Outside the University. However, no outside employment, not otherwise previously approved, whether for compensation or otherwise, shall be performed without the prior written approval of the dean and the Provost. The salary received from the University will be subject to retirement deduction and other appropriate tax deductions.

Section 4. Application Contents

The PDL application must contain the following information:

- A. A non-technical abstract (cannot exceed one (1) page);
- B. A statement of the proposed activities, including a summary of the plan of action and its significance (cannot exceed three (3) pages);
- C. A statement of any additional financial subsidy (ie, external funding) associated with the application (cannot exceed one (1) page);
- D. A statement of how the proposed activities relate to the applicant's current fields of expertise: are the proposed activities an extension of current activities, are they new, etc (cannot exceed one (1) page);
- E. A statement of the expected results and the impact (cannot exceed two (2) pages); expected results may include, for example, publications, presentations, or curriculum development; impact may include, for example, increasing individual effectiveness, or producing academically or socially useful results;
- F. A statement on the feasibility of the proposed activities (cannot exceed one (1) page);
- G. A two (2) page Curriculum Vitae.

Section 5. Application Criteria

- A. A PDL application must meet the following criteria:
 - 1. The application outlines a specific plan indicating the PDL will increase the faculty member's effectiveness;

2. The application demonstrates a strong potential for success;
 3. The PDL activities will lead to deliverables (for example, book contracts, publications, reports, grants, and/or creative accomplishments);
 4. The applicant's vita demonstrates a history of scholarly/creative productivity;
 5. The project has anticipated benefits to the University;
 6. When applicable, the faculty member demonstrates success from earlier PDL's.
- B. Preference should be given to applications that involve one or more of the following:
1. Work at other institutions or sites in order to enhance research, scholarship, creative accomplishment and/or pedagogy;
 2. Collaboration with scholars at other institutions or sites;
 3. Projects that lead to proposals for external funding;
 4. Projects that cannot be completed without the PDL.

Section 6. Procedures

The following procedures shall be followed for the submission and review of PDL proposals.

- A. It is possible for more than one (1) PDL to be granted within an academic unit in any semester or academic year. Bargaining unit faculty intending to apply for a PDL are encouraged to discuss scheduling options with the academic unit chair/director and other faculty in order to minimize the potential impact of multiple PDLs on the academic unit.
- B. Applications shall be submitted to the academic unit chair/director before October 1 of the academic year preceding the professional leave, unless there is a compelling reason to modify the deadline.
- C. The academic unit chair/director shall review each application submitted within the academic unit, and make a recommendation based on the Application Criteria above, and the benefit to the applicant and the

academic unit. The recommendation, positive or negative, shall then be forwarded to the dean by October 8.

In colleges without departments, applications are submitted directly to the dean, who shall review each application submitted within the college as above.

The academic unit chair/director (or dean in colleges without departments) shall provide each applicant with a written copy of the recommendation. If an application is not recommended for approval, an explicit rationale must be included.

- D. The dean shall review each application submitted within the college and make a recommendation, positive or negative, based on the Application Criteria above and the staffing needs of the college. The dean shall provide each applicant with a written copy of the recommendation. If an application is not recommended for approval, an explicit rationale must be included. The determination shall be forwarded to the Provost by November 8.
- E. PDL Joint Review Committee
 - 1. The PDL Joint Review Committee shall be composed of two (2) representatives from the University, including at least one (1) representative from the Provost's Office, and two (2) representatives appointed by the Akron-AAUP.
 - 2. The Committee shall review all applications after they have been submitted to the Provost, and make a recommendation, positive or negative, on each application. The Committee should, whenever possible, complete its work by December 1
 - 3. In making the final decision on approval of applications, the Provost shall take into account the recommendations of the academic unit chair/director, the dean, and the PDL Joint Review Committee.
- F. The Provost shall approve or deny each application based on the previous recommendations and the Application Criteria above by December 8, whenever possible.

Section 7. Faculty Commitment

Faculty members are expected to return to the University for at least one (1) academic year after completion of their professional development leave, unless the faculty member dies or becomes disabled. Within one (1) month of the completion of the

professional leave, the faculty member shall submit to the Provost a report detailing the accomplishments of the faculty member under this professional development program and the faculty member's compliance with the terms of the faculty development leave program. Upon receipt of the report by the Provost, the faculty member shall be entitled to participate in any salary increase for which the faculty member may be eligible during the term of any professional development leave on the same basis as any faculty member who did not participate in a professional development leave.

While on professional development leave, faculty members shall not be eligible to serve on any university, college or departmental committees, with the exception of thesis and dissertation committees.

Every PDL recipient is required to make a public presentation of their work in the academic year following the PDL. Each college shall develop a forum for PDL recipients to make these public presentations.

Section 8. University Commitment

The University shall continue its commitment to support research, teaching and instructional improvement/enhancement activities. This commitment shall be demonstrated in part by making a good faith effort to approve as many recommended proposals as is feasible, based on academic and economic considerations. All recommended proposals that are not able to be funded shall receive the highest priority for approval if resubmitted in the following year.