

Professional Development FAQs – DRAFT!

Q: Do all professional development offerings have to go through the Office of PD/ the PD coordinator?

A: Heck no! The PD Office's focus is on equity-related PD that is intended to support faculty to reach the vision and goals in our Strategic Vision for Equity. However, PD offerings come from lots of places. For example, the Office of Online Learning has a robust set of offerings. PD may be coordinated by faculty, staff or administrators at the department, division and/or program level.

*Q: Where does the funding to pay for PD at the college come from?

A. The state provides funds per the “Flex” program (see appendix A at the end of this document). We can also use a limited amount of funding from our Student Equity and Achievement (SEA) program allocation. The Office of Equity and PD typically uses funds from the SEA Program Budget and the college’s Flex allocation to coordinate and fund PD opportunities in alignment with the campus’ Strategic Vision for Equity. Other PD offerings at Foothill may be paid for from our Flex allocation, B budgets, ...

Q: Do all professional development offerings have to be equity-related?

A: No! If you'd like the Office of Equity to support the offering with either human or monetary resources, then yes, the PD should be related to one or more of the issues/goals identified in the VSE. Other offices or programs on campus may be able to support DE events that are not related to the issues/goals in the VSE. And, you are free to use your own Conference and Travel Fund allocation to attend any event approved by your dean and the Travel and Conference Fund Committee.

Q: Does all PD from the Office of Equity have to be focused solely on race?

No! While the VSE intentionally centers race, we know we often see success disparities along other demographic lines as well. Our VSE is designed to help us eliminate all demographically-predictable disparities in success for historically marginalized groups. We seek to remain conscious of how group marginalizations, especially race, intersect to amplify success disparities for individuals in more than one marginalized group.

Q: How does the PD coordinator decide what PD to offer in-house?

A: The PD coordinator works collaboratively with colleagues, including but not limited to the Dean of Institutional Equity, Diversity and Inclusion and learning communities Program Director to identify PD opportunities that show promise to improve student success and support faculty to reach the vision set forth in our Strategic Vision for Equity. This includes training on effective practices for incorporating an equity perspective in the teaching and services that faculty provide, that are connected to research of the issues, trends, theories and methodologies related to faculty professional development and student learning from an equity perspective, and/or that focus on evidence-based practices of teaching and

learning, such as collaborative learning, critical pedagogy, cultural responsiveness, intersectionality, learning styles, social-emotional (non-cognitive) learning, strengths-based learning and classroom assessment. In a nutshell, the goal is to provide opportunities to support faculty to eliminate demographically predictable disparities.

Q: How can Foothill faculty get support from the PD coordinator to bring a PD event to the college/their division/their department?

A: When a faculty member identifies a PD opportunity that can help support faculty to eliminate demographically predictable disparities, all they have to do is reach out to the Office of Institutional Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (i.e. the PD coordinator) to talk through the specifics of how the opportunity will support eliminating equity gaps, what the professional development learning outcomes are, and how we'll gauge attainment of those outcomes. Then, we work to identify a source of funding for the event(s), whether from the Office of Equity/PD budget or in collaboration with a division dean or other administrator to use B-budget or another source of funding.

Q: What about a college-wide professional development committee? Aren't we supposed to have one?

A. Yes, if we want to use our state-allocated "Flex" funds to pay for our college professional development program (per ed code 87151).

Q: What things can "count" as professional development?

A: We get some general guidance from title 5, spelled out in Appendix A (at the end of this document).

Beyond this, classified professionals have a professional development committee that reviews and approves activities for staff to earn PD credit.

Q: What if I find an off-campus event that is in alignment with the college's mission and/or VSE and I'd like the college to provide funding for a whole team of faculty/staff to attend?

A: In the past, individual stakeholders who have identified events of interest have directly approached college administration, typically either the Office of Instruction, the Office of the President, the Office of Institutional Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, the Dean of Online Learning, and/or the VP of Student Services. The administration reviews the request and can subsequently help identify a source of funding for a Foothill team to participate in the event.

Q: Who determines the amount of PGA given for an event?

A. For staff, the amount of credit is determined per the ACE Agreement [Article 8.6](#) and the Memorandum of Understanding, "[PGA Calculation, May 6, 2020](#)"

For faculty, the amount of PGA credit is awarded per the FA Agreement. See [Appendix A](#), (the “Professional Growth Activities” portion), and Appendix [O1](#), [O2](#), and [O3](#).¹ In general, 18 hours of attendance at a workshop or seminar is equivalent to 1 PGA unit.

It can simplify the process for faculty if a pre-set amount of PGA units is awarded, rather than hours of attendance². Past practice has largely been for FA or other faculty stakeholder to negotiate with the district and/or college to formalize a set amount of PGA credit e.g. serving on a tenure review committee automatically earns you one unit of PGA. This may happen via the formal District-FA negotiations process, or when a stakeholder approaches the union and college administration, (usually the Office of Instruction), to request a set amount of PGA credit for an event or service. E.g. in the past, a faculty member received approval to award one unit of PGA to participants in a “teaching exchange” program. Last year, the Community and Communication Council reviewed a request to allocate 1 unit of PGA credit for service as a mentor for a student participating in the Research and Service Learning Symposium. The amount of pre-set PGA is calculated consistent with the expectation that 1 PGA unit = 18 hours of participation in the PD work.

Q: Where can I get my certificate verifying my participation in a PD event?

- A. For events organized by the Foothill Office of Professional Development, each participant whose participation has been documented will receive a certificate of attendance via email. If an event is being offered by another office like the Office of Online Learning or the Science Learning Institute, documented participants should expect to receive verification of their participation directly from that office, unless the organizer has pre-arranged for the Office of Equity and PD to generate attendance certificates. When events are held via Zoom, the Zoom meeting report is the appropriate documentation. For in-person events, attendance is verified via a sign in/sign out sheet.

Q: Where is the accountability regarding professional development events organized by Foothill College individuals or programs? I.e. how do we know if they’re “working”?

- A. The organizers for each PD event identify the intended professional development learning outcomes and share these with participants in advance, and these are documented along with the attendance logs. Following the event, the organizer is responsible for measuring whether or not the outcomes were achieved. This is most often via anonymous survey.

Q: Who pays the part-time faculty stipends for participating in PD?

- A. It depends. The PD coordinator does have a small yearly budget that fluctuates based on state funding and overall college budgeting needs and priorities. These funds are prioritized to use for PD events and stipends for participating in opportunities that are in alignment with the college’s equity goals and Strategic Vision for Equity. Other areas of the college also have “pots” of money for PD, such as the Office of Online Learning and the Office of Instruction. This year (2021-2022) and this year only, we also have an agreement to allow stipends to be paid from unused travel and conference fund monies.

¹ Fillable versions of all three forms are available at https://hr.fhda.edu/_forms.html

² This eliminates the need to convert hours of attendance into PGA units, and removes any uncertainty about how much PGA will be granted.

Appendix A: Title 5 and California Education Code

- **Education Code section 87150.**

There is hereby established the Community College Professional Development Program, to be administered by the board of governors, the purpose of which is to provide state general funds to community colleges for supporting locally developed and implemented faculty and staff development programs. [Translation – this established the FLEX program for PD]

- **Education code section 87151**

The board of governors shall annually allocate funds, when appropriated for the purposes of this article, only to a community college district whose chief executive officer has submitted to the chancellor an affidavit that includes all of the following:

- a) A statement that each campus within the community college district has an advisory committee, composed of administrators, faculty, and staff representatives, which has assisted in the assessment of the faculty and staff professional development needs and in the design of the plan to meet those needs.
- b) A campus human resources plan has been completed for the current and subsequent fiscal years
- c) A report of the actual expenditures for faculty and staff development for the preceding year.

- **Education code section 87152**

- a. Any funding appropriated for the purposes of this article [i.e FLEX funds] shall be allocated to the community college districts that provide professional development opportunities to both faculty and staff. Funding shall be distributed in accordance with the rules and regulations adopted by the board of governors.
- b. Community college districts that receive funding pursuant to this section [i.e. Flex funds] shall include the employee's time used participating in the Community College Professional Development Program in the employee's contractually obligated hours.

- **Education Code section 87153** states the authorized uses of professional development (FLEX) funds allocated shall include:

- i. Improvement of teaching.
- ii. Maintenance of current academic and technical knowledge and skills.
- iii. In-service training for vocational education and employment preparation programs.
- iv. Retraining to meet changing institutional needs.
- v. Intersegmental exchange programs.
- vi. Development of Innovations in Instructional and administrative techniques and program effectiveness.
- vii. Compute and technological proficiency programs.
- viii. Courses and training implementing affirmative action and upward mobility programs.

- ix. Other activities determined to be related to educational and professional development pursuant to criteria established by the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges, including, but not limited to, programs designed to develop self-esteem.
- **Title 5 55724 (a)4:** Activities for college personnel may also include, but need not be limited to, the following:
 - i. course instruction and evaluation;
 - ii. staff development, in-service training and instructional improvement.
 - iii. program and course curriculum or learning resource development and evaluation;
 - iv. student personnel services;
 - v. learning resource services;
 - vi. related activities, such as student advising, guidance, orientation, matriculation services, and student, faculty, and staff diversity;
 - vii. department or division meetings, conferences and workshops, and institutional research;
 - viii. other duties as assigned by the district;
 - ix. the necessary supporting activities for the above.

Appendix B: Accreditation Standards for Professional Development

Standard IIIA. Human Resources, Section 14³

“The institution plans for and provides all personnel with appropriate opportunities for continued professional development, consistent with the institutional mission and based on evolving pedagogy, technology, and learning needs. The institution systematically evaluates professional development programs and uses the results of these evaluations as the basis for improvement.”

Standard evaluation criteria⁴:

- The institution offers professional development programs consistent with its mission
- The institution has methods to identify professional development needs of its faculty and other personnel
- The college engages in meaningful evaluation of professional development activities and uses results for improvement
- The college measures the impact of professional development activities on the improvement of teaching and learning.

³ https://accjc.org/wp-content/uploads/Accreditation-Standards_-Adopted-June-2014.pdf

⁴ <https://accjc.org/wp-content/uploads/Guide-to-Institutional-Self-Evaluation-Improvement-and-Peer-Review.pdf> page 66