

Foothill College
PROFESSIONAL CONFERENCE FUNDS
Guidelines and Procedures
Office of Instruction

CONFERENCE FUNDS

Professional Conference Funds provide opportunities for regular and contract faculty, as well as part-time faculty with re-employment preference and classified staff, to attend professional conferences or seminars for improvement of teaching and learning, and for professional development. The Board appropriates \$70,400 per year for Foothill College with an annual district-wide maximum of \$1,600 for faculty and \$1,500 for staff employees. Please note an application request is not a guarantee of funding. Actual funding may be lower than requested, due to limitation of funds or other criteria established by the Conference and Travel Committee.

COMMITTEE COMPOSITION

The Professional Conference Fund shall be administered at each college under procedures established by the President with the concurrence of FA and the Academic Senate. If concurrence is not reached, the fund shall be administered by a Professional Conference Committee composed of one regular faculty employee selected by FA, one regular faculty employee selected by the Academic Senate, and two management employees selected by the President.

REQUEST FOR FUNDS

Funds are requested by written application submitted to the Professional Conference Committee. Application forms are available at <http://www.foothill.edu/staff/development/travel.php>.

Conference Funds are not to be confused with the Training/Re-Training Stipend under Article 35 of the FA Agreement. The Training/Re-Training Stipend is designated to defer, in whole or part, the cost of tuition, books or supplies. It can also be used to supplement the faculty employee's income, if necessary and appropriate, while he or she is engaged in a program of study, work, experience or training requested by the Board, in order to meet the need of the District and its students.

APPLICATION PROCESS

A completed application form must be submitted to the Office of the President prior to the date the conference will take place. Applications submitted after the conference start date will not be considered.

To ensure equitable funding throughout the year, funds are divided among the summer, fall, winter, and spring quarters. If all funding has been depleted for the given quarter, applications will no longer be accepted for those conferences.

The committee will consider applications for each quarter only during the periods listed below. Please note that the periods listed in italics are dependent on the remaining allocated funding. Applications for conferences during a given quarter must follow the time periods as listed below, however one does not need to wait for the time period that includes dates of their conference in order to submit

their application. For example, if a faculty member would like to attend a conference that occurs during the fall quarter on December 5th, he or she can submit a completed application as early as September 1st, which will be reviewed with all other faculty applications after the closing date of September 25th. Please note that the academic year begins in summer and ends in spring.

- Summer Conferences: March 1st-15th, April 1st-20th, May 1st-20th, June 1st-15th
- Fall Conferences: September 1st-25th, October 1st-20th, November 1st-20th, December 1st-15th
- Winter Conferences: November 1st-20th, December 1st-15th, January 1st-20th, February 1st-20th, March 1st-15th
- Spring Conferences: February 1st-20th, March 1st-15th, April 1st-20th, May 1st-20th, June 1st-15th

FUNDING POLICIES

Below you will find a list of expenses that are covered, in whole or in part, by the Professional Conference Fund. For each item below, you will see documentation required for the application submission. Please note that failure to include the noted support documents will result in non-funding for that specific expense. The completed application must have the signature of the dean or manager for consideration by the committee.

Conference/Workshop Registration Fee –

Fees for admission to the conference or workshop are covered by the Professional Conference Fund, but not membership fees that are separate from conference registration fees. When submitting your application, you must include a brochure, program, or printed webpage that clearly shows the activity description or agenda **and** the registration fees.

Airfare –

Base rate airfare, taxes, and fees are covered by the Professional Conference fund. Per Board policy AP 7400, The standard for domestic air travel is coach class and for international travel is business class. Reservations should be made early to obtain the lowest rates. Employees should ensure plans are confirmed prior to purchasing tickets with flight restrictions or no-refund clauses. When submitting your application, you must include an airfare estimate or receipt of purchase that clearly identifies economy or coach class seating. In the case of airfare that appears higher in cost than the norm, the committee may request additional supporting paperwork from applicant showing comparable rates. It is the responsibility of the applicant to provide these materials, therefore the committee suggests collecting this information at the time of ticket purchase.

Mileage –

If you are driving to a conference, mileage will be reimbursed for travel to and from the conference. Reimbursement is based on the current IRS Mileage Rate at a maximum of 300 miles and is not applicable for conference attendees who are flying to conferences. Beyond that mileage, the employee will be reimbursed at the “economy” airfare to/from that location. When submitting your application, you must include a Google Map showing the one-way mileage from the Foothill Campus or home, whichever is closer.

Ground Transportation –

This category consists of car rentals, local transportation, bridge/lane tolls, and parking.

Per Board policy AP 7400, the standard car rental is a compact automobile; however, a larger car can be used if more than two employees share a single automobile. When submitting your application, you must include a car rental estimate or receipt.

Local transportation includes shuttles, BART, CalTrain, Uber, Lyft, taxis, etc. The application should include an estimate of all costs for the duration of your conference. There are several websites that will estimate taxi and rideshare costs to give you a fairly accurate estimate, while the public transit websites can provide you specific costs.

Bridge/Lane tolls and parking reimbursements are applicable only to those who have driven to their conference or used a rental car. The cost for overnight airport parking will not be reimbursed, as it is expected one will use other forms of transportation (as listed above) in order to get to and from the airport. The application should include an estimate of all ground transportation costs for the duration of your conference.

Lodging –

Per Board policy AP 7400, hotel arrangements should only be sought when staying overnight and the hotel is outside a 75 mile radius from the District. Premium accommodations should be avoided unless no other suitable arrangements are available or special circumstances justify their use. In the case of hotel accommodation that appears higher in cost than the norm, generally over \$250/night, the committee may request additional supporting paperwork from the applicant showing comparable rates. It is the responsibility of the applicant to provide these materials, therefore the committee suggests collecting this information at the time of booking or receiving the estimate. No Airbnb or VRBO-type rentals are reimbursable. When submitting your application, you must include a hotel estimate or receipt of booking that includes all taxes. If the hotel does not provide the applicable taxes on their website, use the base room rate x 15% for your estimate.

Meals –

Meals will be reimbursed at a rate of \$55 per full day of conference attendance, but there is no reimbursement for travel days or partially attended conference days. If the conference is the form of a retreat where lodging and all meals are provided, there will be no reimbursement of the per diem rate. When submitting your application, you must include the total number of **full attendance days only**. Validation will be made by the committee based on other submitted materials such as duration of hotel stay, flight plans, etc. Please note that the committee may request additional supporting paperwork from applicant and the final decision of what constitutes a full day is at the discretion of the committee.

PAYMENT AND REIMBURSEMENT PROCESS

With sufficient lead-time, some expenses can be paid in advance by submitting a Direct Pay form. Checks can be requested for conference registration fees, lodging expenses and other pre-determined amounts. Direct Pay requests require backup in the form of registration documentation or other paperwork that includes a specific amount to be paid as well as the name and address of the receiving institution. Direct Pay forms are available at: <http://business.fhda.edu/accounting/bannerforms>.

Employees are responsible for paying for all professional development related expenses that have not been paid in advance via a Direct Pay request. Requests for reimbursement must be submitted on a Trip Voucher, which can be obtained at: <http://www.foothill.edu/staff/development/travel.php>.

If the travel expenses are charged to a District pro-card, an expense transfer must be completed and submitted to the Office of the President. The expense transfer can only be completed once the expenses have been entered (appear) in the Banner budget system. Copies of receipts should be attached, and a printout of the Banner budget showing the expense appearing on the office budget.

Original receipts must be attached to the Trip Voucher. It is highly recommended that the employee keeps copies of all receipts. Your completed trip voucher, with receipts and proof of payment should be submitted to the Office of the President within 10 business days of the last date of conference attendance. If the amount claimed on the Trip Voucher exceeds \$50 of the Travel and Conference Application amount in any of the categories listed under "Funding Policies" above, the applicant must attach a letter addressed to the committee explaining the variance. Trip Vouchers submitted without a letter of explanation will be reimbursed based on the amount listed on the Travel and Conference Application. Trip vouchers submitted after 10 business days after the last date of conference attendance will not be honored.