



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:

- Student Access and Success
- High Quality Education
- Community Enrichment

A key objective of these themes is the development and strengthening of our employee's knowledge, skills and engagement. The college's 2012-2022 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, July 16, 2013, August 27, 2015, January 2020.

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 and annual conferences 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 a 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 Division Chair/Director 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 with the exception of proposals less than \$200. Proposals less than \$200 will be decided by committee vote only.
4. All applicants will be notified of the status of their application within 10 working days of the receipt of the application, if possible.
5. *Multiple applications will be accepted and funded on a case by case basis.*

Professional Development Committee

Membership

- Human Resources
- Two representatives from Staff Senate
- Two representatives from Faculty Senate
- Two contract professionals

Disbursement

- The amount available for professional development each fiscal year will be recommended by the budget management team.

- A set portion of the total available funding for the fiscal year will be set aside for 2 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.
- 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.)