

Polk State College Procedure

Subject	Reference	Date	Number
Use of Staff and Program Development Funds (SPD)		9/06/2016	6035

I. Purpose.

The purpose of this procedure is to describe the process whereby staff may be provided support for approved expenses incurred for program development, taking courses, and attending conferences and training in accordance with professional development goals. This provision requires that the individual is eligible and that funding is available.

Staff development is the improvement of staff performance through activities which update and upgrade competence specified for present or planned positions. Staff includes all regular full-time and regular part-time employees.

Program development is the evaluation and improvement of existing programs, including the design of evaluation instruments to establish a basis for improvements, as well as the designing of new programs. SPD funds are intended for program initiation or improvement rather than maintenance or expansion.

An SPD committee will be established as set forth in Polk State College Procedure 6002 to evaluate and recommend proposed programs for SPD funding.

II. Objective.

The objective of this procedure is to provide a consistent, equitable, and common basis for the granting of support for projects, courses, and other professional development opportunities for Polk State College staff.

III. Policy.

- a) Coursework: Based on established criteria below, financial support for approved coursework at a regionally-accredited institution may be provided to eligible Polk State College employees through Staff and Program Development (SPD) funds to be the lesser of 12 semester credit hours (18 quarter hours) or \$5250 in a calendar year (based on IRS regulation, chapter 2 of Publication 15-b). Exceptions must have prior approval by the President or President's designee.
 - i. Reimbursement for semester-based coursework at a private college shall be at the current USF Tampa rate for equivalent-level courses. The employee is responsible for any difference in cost.
 - ii. Reimbursement for semester-based coursework at other State University System (SUS) colleges will be at their in-state tuition rate.
 - iii. Reimbursement for Competency-Based Education (CBE)/variable-credit coursework will be based on the USF Tampa rate for equivalent-level course credits not to exceed \$2625 per semester and \$5250 per calendar year.

- b) Travel to Professional Conferences: Eligible employees may request SPD funds from their immediate supervisor to attend professional conferences. A travel leave request with supporting documentation (agendas, registration, etc.) and an SPD-5A Activity Request form must be completed and approved prior to travel. Following the conference, the employee must complete an SPD-6A Evaluation of Activity form no later than 60 days of return date.

- c) SPD Programs: Each March the VP for Academic Affairs will solicit proposals from faculty and staff for SPD program development proposals. Proposals must include the Staff and Program Development Project proposal cover sheet, Proposal, and the Agreement by and between Individual in Charge of Project and Polk State College. The SPD Committee will evaluate the proposals prior to July 1 of the new fiscal year.
- d) To receive tuition reimbursement or to be approved for SPD travel funds, there MUST be a demonstrated benefit to the College. Furthermore, if Polk State College offers the degree, the employee will be directed to use the Employee Education Fund (EEF) per Procedure 6059 and complete the coursework/degree at Polk State.

IV. Procedure.

A. Eligibility Criteria for SPD:

1. The employee must be classified as a regular full-time or regular part-time employee at Polk State College with a performance evaluation level of "satisfactory" or above, unless this requirement is waived by an appropriate President's Staff member upon determination that the course is needed for job performance.
2. Courses must be approved and recommended in advance by the immediate supervisor and an appropriate President's Staff member.
3. Courses must be directly related to the employee's professional development goals for the benefit of the College.

B. Criteria for Determining the Amount of SPD Financial Support:

1. Based on stated goals, objectives, and the funding available, SPD budget heads may limit the number of courses and travel to professional conferences to any one employee during a given fiscal year.
2. Financial support for coursework completed by an employee at the request of the institution shall include:
 - a. Application fee
 - b. Registration fee
 - c. Other mandatory fees
 - d. Books
 - e. Travel to institutions other than Polk State College
3. Financial support for completed coursework initiated at the request of the employee shall be limited to the following:
 - a. Application fee
 - b. Registration fee
 - c. Other mandatory fees

Exceptions to the above must be approved by the President or President's designee.

- ##### C. Registration for credit and non-credit courses other than those provided by Polk State College, required certifications, and required continuing-education courses (including online courses):

Payment is by reimbursement upon completion of course. The following steps shall be followed:

1. The employee completes the SPD 5B (Coursework) Request for APPROVAL form and submits it to the immediate supervisor for approval and signature. The supervisor determines SPD eligibility based on the criteria provided above (IV. A).
2. If eligible, the SPD 5B (Coursework) Request for APPROVAL form is forwarded to the appropriate President's Staff member for approval/disapproval. If approved, the employee attends class(es) and requests reimbursement upon satisfactory completion.

"Satisfactory Completion" of an off-campus course is defined as a grade of *A* or *B* for graduate-level courses and above, and an *A*, *B*, or *C* for undergraduate courses.

3. The employee requesting reimbursement goes to the appropriate President's Staff member/SPD budget head administrative assistant to sign the SPD 6B (Coursework) Request for REIMBURSEMENT form and submits documentation of detailed proof of payment and grade received. A disbursement request will be entered for reimbursement, and this will be approved online by the SPD budget authority. The SPD 5B (Coursework) Request for APPROVAL / SPD 6B (Coursework) Request for REIMBURSEMENT documentation shall be maintained in the SPD Office (Vice President for Academic Affairs) for reporting.

The VP for Academic Affairs shall submit a report to President's Staff on funds expended for Staff and Program Development each September. The report shall include information relating to:

- a. The number of participants and activities benefitting from staff development funding.
- b. A description of programs improved and initiated.
- c. An evaluation of the effectiveness of staff and program development expenditures relative to professional development and program improvement/initiation.

Documentation will be maintained for accountability purposes such as annual audits and accreditation requirements.

History

Adopted: August 20, 1981, Reimbursement for Off-Campus Courses

Revised: July 23, 1984 (also Subject Title Change to Reimbursement for Courses Using SPD); September 26, 1994; May 13, 2010; and December 6, 2013 (Title Change to Use of Staff and Program Development Funds SPD); and July 1, 2014; December 4, 2014; March 17, 2015; and September 6, 2016

	9/6/16		9/6/16
Executive Responsible for Procedure	Date	President's Staff Member's Approval	Date
			9/6/14
President's Approval			Date