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NAVAJO TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

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Professional Development Plan Policy

March 2022

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Navajo Technical University Professional Development Plan Policy

I. Policy

Navajo Technical University (NTU) encourages its personnel to participate in Professional Development Plan (PDP) activities. The objectives of professional development are to assist employees to improve their job skills, obtain job-related knowledge and information, increase productivity and efficiency, enhance classroom skills, increase knowledge in academic areas, and comply with licensure and membership requirements.

II. History

In 2006, Navajo Technical University, then known as the Crownpoint Institute of Technology, first established the Professional Development Plan to increase its quality of teaching as the institution sought accreditation and began developing academic degree programs. The Board of Regents first approved a PDP policy in 2006 to assist instructors and staff with their acquisition of appropriate degrees, vocational teacher, and other pertinent certifications. At the time, vocational and trade programs were the institution's focus. Eventually, the Crownpoint Institute of Technology became Navajo Technical College and, in 2013, became Navajo Technical University. As the institution changed, its training priorities also changed for staff employees and qualified faculty to ensure the highest quality of instruction and service to the Navajo Nation.

NTU's rapid growth has impacted PDP. When the program was first developed, NTU had a small number of faculty and staff to serve an enrollment of a few hundred students. At that time, PDP funding required to assist each employee was sufficient. As NTU grew, there was a concurrent need to reprioritize the activities that were supported by PDP funds to maximize the impact of the program.

III. Purpose

Professional development involves the continuous process of acquiring new knowledge and skills that relate to specific professions and employment responsibilities and maintaining a high level of respectability in respective professions and employment positions. It plays a key role to retain qualified, certified, trained, informed, and motivated employees.

Navajo Technical University employees participating in the Professional Development Plan Program must develop and submit an updated Professional Development Plan for every current fiscal year. The primary objectives in the plan are as follows:

- Productive job performance
- Accountability
- Quality instruction and support services
- Accreditation
- Professional growth
- Sharing of ideas and dissemination of good practice
- Building strong and effective teams
- Practicing with proper licensure
- Liability coverage
- Memberships to ensure compliancy

The Human Resources Department will perform a comprehensive assessment of employee professional development, training, and certification by the end of each semester and use it to develop future Professional Development Plans that will address the specific needs of all NTU employees.

IV. Professional Development Plan Committee

A. The Professional Development Plan Committee shall be comprised of seven (7) members appointed by the Navajo Technical University President and shall include:

1. Human Resource Director - Serves as the Chairperson of the committee.
2. Faculty Representative – three (3) Faculty members
3. Staff Representative – three (3) Staff members

B. Term of Chairperson and Committee Members:

The Human Resources Director shall serve as the Chairperson. All other appointed members will serve a two-year term. If the Chairperson cannot be present for regularly scheduled meetings, he/she will designate an "acting" chair and will be responsible to provide that person with all needed information to conduct the meeting(s).

C. Quorum:

Four (4) committee members will constitute a quorum for meetings.

D. Functions of the Professional Development Plan Committee:

1. Consider, establish, and implement criteria for Professional Development Plan, review, and revise criteria annually.
2. Oversee the implementation and review of individual PDPs that involve pursuit of advanced higher education degrees, coursework, obtaining relevant skills, certification, membership, or licensure, to ensure compliance with the PDP guidelines approved by the NTU Board of Regents.
3. Review individual progress reports at the end of each fiscal year and create an annual report to be presented to the Administration and Board of Regents.
4. Coordinate with the Human Resource Department for proper submission of required documents and progress reports.
5. Collaborate with the Human Resource Department to develop a university-wide training needs analysis and recommend a centralized training plan for all personnel.
6. Establish an appeal policy for personnel use.
7. Meet once a month and when a meeting is called by the Chairperson.
8. Provide an orientation during annual fall convocation regarding the required Professional Development Plan.

V. Requirements

The Professional Development Plan for full-time employees' documents how each employee will update his or her current job knowledge and skills, to ensure that employees remain qualified for their respective positions. All faculty members must maintain their qualifications to teach in their respective fields. Faculty teaching in certificate programs and in associate degree programs must maintain current and appropriate credentials including minimal requirements such as associate degrees, journeymen licenses or vocational-technical certificates. All general education faculty must have a master's degree in the field or related field in which they are teaching, preferably, a doctorate degree. Faculty teaching at the baccalaureate level must possess a master's degree in their field of instruction. Faculty teaching at the graduate level must possess a doctorate degree or an applicable terminal degree. Where appropriate, faculty must maintain current licensure in good standing and memberships, as necessary.

All full-time employees shall submit a PDP with their annual evaluation. This plan can include training, certification, membership, licensure, or other activities that will better prepare an individual for his/her current job and maintain a high-level of qualification in their field of instruction.

VI. Procedures

A. Individual Professional Development Plan

Faculty must design their annual Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP) to align with the academic and licensure requirements set forth in their contract or as required by the University to meet its accreditation requirements. Staff must design their annual IPDP in alignment with their contracted employment responsibility.

The IPDP consists of a plan designed for one year of activity that will be accomplished in the current contract year. Each IPDP is developed to meet the current needs of the University. The supervisor, and Director of Human Resources, must approve each PDP submittal. Each activity on an employee's IPDP must be submitted and approved separately on a "Prior Approval" form.

Forms are available on the NTU website in the employee resource section and in the Human Resource Office:

<http://www.navajotech.edu/images/facultyStaff/employeeResources/docs/pdpPlanFacultyAndGeneralStaff.pdf>

B. Professional Development Plan

In both the development and approval of a PDP, the following must be considered:

- The activity is aligned with the NTU Mission and strategic plan, furthermore with the Higher Learning Commission standards
- The activity in the PDP is relevant to the professional development needs and/or professional license needs of the participant's position, or to a documented specific employment need within the University.
- The cost of the PDP activity must be reasonable and supported by the PDP budget.

For each required activity, an employee individual assessment shall be developed with the immediate supervisor. If the activity is not aligned with an employee's specific job requirements, other courses of training are to be recommended by the immediate supervisor.

C. Prior Approval of Professional Development Plan Activities

Any PDP activity that requires payment by NTU must have prior approval from the employee's supervisor or the appropriate oversight dean, and the Human Resource Director. Prior approval is required for courses taken under the NTU Tuition Waiver Policy referenced in the NTU Employee Handbook. Prior approval is also required for vocational and professional licensure, certification, and membership fees.

1. Documentation and Validation of Activities

Completion of each activity will be validated by an official transcript, and/or other relevant form of documentation provided by the employee, which will be placed in the employee's personnel file as a permanent record. Employee shall submit an activity completion report immediately after each training or development activity (forms are available through the employee resource website). Participate has up to 45 days to submit your official transcript after completing a college/university course.

D. Progress and Evaluation

The employee's supervisor will monitor the progress and evaluation of the PDP. In addition, the Human Resource Director will evaluate all personnel PDP on an annual basis.

If specific expectations are not met in a timely manner, the employee's supervisor, department chair, or dean may recommend administrative action to the Human Resource Director including probation, suspension, or termination according to the Employee and/or Faculty Handbook.

E. Reimbursement of Fees

1. Reimbursement for Trades, Vocational, or Professional Faculty Credentials
Faculty in the Trades, Vocational, and Applied Science programs are required to have journeyman's licenses, certifications, liability coverage, professional memberships, and/or other licenses for their employment and to maintain currency in the profession as may be required by the tribal, state, or federal governments. Annual costs to maintain these credentials, licenses, certifications, insurance, memberships, etc. will be covered by the University. The supervisor and Human Resource Director will review requests for reimbursement of these costs. Each employee is responsible for maintaining these requirements.

2. Reimbursement for Credit Courses

- The extent to which a request for undertaking a degree program or college coursework can be monetarily supported by NTU will depend on several factors including the following:
 - The relevance of the degree or coursework to achieving NTU's strategic plan.
 - Direct financial cost and hidden cost will need to be considered (hidden cost includes the amount of time that an employee may need to undertake coursework and therefore, decrease his or her NTU contracted work time).
 - The amount of degree or coursework support that is reasonable for any one faculty member to receive from NTU.
 - Priority will be given to requests for pursuit of degree programs offered by NTU.
 - The availability of funds in the NTU budget.
- An employee earning college credits toward an associate's, bachelor's, master's degree program, or a doctoral degree program, upon proof of successful completion of a course or courses, may be reimbursed tuition, fees, and book costs, up to the designated amount for the specific degree. To qualify for reimbursement, an employee must show proof of preapproval for each course taken and provide an official transcript for the courses requested for reimbursement to the Office of Human Resources. Continuing students must also report on progress to completion.
- The cost of credits that shall be reimbursed may not exceed six credit hours per an employee's contract year for an associate's, a bachelor's degree, a master's degree, or a doctoral degree. Reimbursement by NTU per contract year will be allowed up to **\$1,500** for an associate degree program, **\$2,500** for a bachelor's degree program, **\$3,500** for a master's degree program, and **\$4,500** for a doctoral degree program. These amounts can cover tuition, fees, and books. These amounts are not meant to cover full costs of attendance; each employee is responsible for supplementing the cost of his or her education.
- **Employees that enroll in a degree program paid for by NTU during their contract term are required to sign an agreement at the time of enrollment that they will continue with the university for two additional years for each degree earned.**
- A full-time employee cannot be a full-time student at the same time during business hours, Monday through Friday between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

- An employee must secure supervisor's written approval, as part of approved annual professional development plan, if a course is to be taken during normal working hours and arrangements must be made for any time that is to be made up, or the employee can use a flexible work schedule. In addition, an employee may take paid time off (PTO) during class times.
- Refer to the Faculty Sabbatical Policy for additional information.
- If an employee leaves before the additional year of service, he or she will be legally responsible for the repayment of all tuition, fees, books, and other costs on a pro-rata basis. If an employee's contract is not renewed for any reason, or he/she is released before or during the contract year for any reason other than cause, the repayment agreement shall be considered null and void. If the employee is released for cause, the agreement will remain in force, and he/she will be responsible for the repayment of all reimbursed costs on a pro-rata basis.
- Successful completion of any coursework for degree programs shall mean a grade of "B" or better. Grades below "B" will not be reimbursed, nor will any other related costs for such coursework be reimbursed. NTU will not reimburse for any courses that are being retaken. Any individual that earns a "C" grade or lower will not be granted preapproval to take further courses until that individual provides an official transcript showing successful completion of the failed course plus another degree checklist course that he or she pays for without NTU support.
- Other Sources of Scholarships. Employee is required to apply to other scholarships prior to requesting for a refund on professional development activity that is related to earning a degree, such as
 - Office of Navajo Nation Scholarship and Financial Aid (ONNSFA)
 - American Indian College Fund
 - American Indian Graduate Center
 - Pell Grant
 - Chapter Scholarship

3. Unallowable PDP Costs

Employees who receive scholarships, fellowships, or other forms of financial aid from other sources, such as from the Navajo Nation, Pell, American Indian College Fund, American Indian Graduate Center, Mellon Foundation, may not also request for concurrent reimbursement from the Navajo Technical University. If an employee is receiving funding from two sources for the same academic activity, the employee shall reimburse Navajo Technical University for the amount received.

PDP expenses for university or college courses are solely for tuition, fees, and books; other related expenses such as for transportation, lodging, meals, and time off from work are not covered.

F. Training and Professional Development Not Covered in E.

Training and staff development can be defined as an activity designed to help individual employees to become more effective at their work by improving, updating, or refining their knowledge and skills. This encompasses a range of activities, including, for example, attendance or presentation at conferences or seminars, participation in centrally organized training offered by the NTU Human Resource office, visits to other institutions, participating in webinars, work shadowing, coaching, or mentoring. The responsibility for identifying training and development needs is shared between the supervisor and employee.

The approval of requests for training and other development activity, not addressed will be made by supervisors and senior management based on departmental budgets. How the training or development activity is necessary for an employee to enhance his/her job and the level of benefit to NTU must be documented and verified. The extent to which a training and development activity can be supported by NTU will depend on several factors including the following:

- The relevance of the training and development need to support the NTU Mission and be tied to the Strategic Plan.
- Direct financial cost and hidden cost will need to be considered (hidden cost could include the amount of work time needed for a specific activity).
- The amount of training and development support that is reasonable for anyone staff person to undertake in each period.
- The availability of funds in the NTU budget.

Costs associated with an employee's training, professional development, and/or degree coursework irrelevant to their current job description will not be covered by NTU. Furthermore, an employee's training, professional development, and/or degree coursework above the minimum job requirements upon hire will not be covered by NTU.

It is the employee's responsibility to update their supervisor and Human Resource Director of their progress upon completion of their training or development activity by submitting an activity completion report, certificate, or other verification of completion.

G. Appeals Regarding Disputes or Disagreements

Disputes or disagreements over the PDP policy or process between an employee and their supervisor should be resolved at the lowest level, if possible. Issues that cannot be resolved at the Dean or Director level shall be treated as grievances and shall follow the Grievance Policy as outlined in the Employee Handbook.

H. Storage and Record Keeping

- Employees requesting for copies of their IPDP from their personnel file will follow the guidelines from the Employee Handbook.
- All completed PDP files are placed in the employee's personnel file and are available in the Human Resources Department. It is recommended that faculty and staff maintain a copy of their approved IPDP as well.

VII. Amendments

The Navajo Technical University Board of Regents may amend any part(s) of these policies upon recommendation from the Professional Development Plan Committee and the Navajo Technical University President.

The terms of this Professional Development Plan Policy are subject to an annual review and revision by the Professional Development Plan Committee and approval by the University's Board of Regents. The policy shall be effective June 1st every other year.

The forms required for submittal and documentation of IPDP for both faculty and staff can be obtained from the Human Resources Office or in the employee resource section at www.navajotech.edu

NAVAJO TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY
INDIVIDUAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN Form
 (ONE-YEAR PLAN for FACULTY AND GENERAL STAFF)

Last Name	First/Middle Int.	Title	DEPARTMENT	Certificate	Length	Endorsement	
My goal is (select one or more)	<input type="checkbox"/> Initial Licensure/Certificate	<input type="checkbox"/> Re-Licensure	<input type="checkbox"/> Technical Skills	<input type="checkbox"/> AA/AAS	<input type="checkbox"/> BA/BS	<input type="checkbox"/> MA/MS	<input type="checkbox"/> DOCTORAL

Comments:

Current Year Action Plan From: ___/___/___ To: ___/___/___ Date Prepared: ___/___/___ Revision # _____

*NOTE: Faculty employee must design his/her annual Professional Development Plan (PDP) to align with the academic requirements set forth in their employment contract or as required by the University to meet its accreditation requirements. Staff employee must design their annual PDP Plan in alignment with the academic requirements set forth in their contracted employment responsibility. The PDP consists of a plan designed for **one year of activity** that will be accomplished in the current contract Fiscal year.*

Objectives:	Methods of Attainment:	Projected Completion Date	Units	
			Proposed	Awarded

*For employees on a degree track, include a copy of the degree requirements.

Signatures: _____
 Employee Date Reviewed by Supervisor Title Date
 Next date to re-new PDP (mm/dd/yyyy) ___/___/___

QUESTIONNAIRE:

What is the highest degree required for your current position: _____

Identify which Strategic Priority IPDP is linked to: _____

Employee is required to submit all transcripts for courses being paid for by the University (Approved Tuition Waiver and Approved Professional Development) _____