

OREGON INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

Professional Development for Staff

OIT-21-315

This policy is established to provide guidelines for administering a program of professional development for classified and non-teaching unclassified staff members.

Oregon Institute of Technology encourages its staff to participate in educational/developmental activities. This policy supports the educational mission and allows for the enhancement of current skills thereby improving productivity and service to students, the campus, and the community.

Strategies and Responsibilities for Staff Development

In addition to enrollment in academic courses, participation in educational/developmental activities may include developmental assignments, workshops, conferences or training seminars, and similar activities.

The ultimate responsibility for determining the relevance, desirability, and timing of staff participation in educational/developmental activities rests with the individual's supervisor, within these policy guidelines. The conditions under which work-release time may be granted are determined by the appropriate supervisor and should be clearly specified when approving the staff member's request.

Flexible strategies should be adopted to allow staff to participate in educational/developmental activities, while balancing workloads and maintaining essential services. These strategies may include:

- rotating the opportunity for work-release time among unit personnel,
- adjusting the work hours i.e., staggering work shifts and/or lunch periods, or arranging for after-hours work where needed,
- arranging for other units (or staff) to temporarily assume the functions of smaller units that would not otherwise release staff,
- requiring staff to participate in educational/developmental activities in time periods that will avoid placing an unfair burden on those who are not participating.

Whenever human resources are reallocated, some cost is inevitable. Department heads are expected to meet this challenge with fairness, a concern for the best interests of their staff, and a dedication to the educational mission of the institute. Supervisors are expected to encourage staff to seek opportunities for participation in educational/developmental activities that will enable them to better fulfill their potential for service to the institute.

Guidelines

1. **Definition:** Approved educational/developmental activities are directly job or career-related. This is interpreted to include any activity that would enable staff members to become more effective in their current position or would prepare them for advancement within the department, division or institute.
2. **Work-release Time:** Supervisors should make every effort to provide the opportunity for all interested staff members to participate in at least one educational/developmental activity each year.

Staff members who are employed .50 FTE or more may seek work-release time equivalent to one course per term. Work-release for the hours involved may be approved by the individual's supervisor for full, partial or no loss of pay, based on the relationship of the activity to employment and specific circumstances. For example, release time that is not directly related to the present position may be approved as release time without pay.

3. **Eligibility Requirements for Staff Fee Rates:** Staff members are encouraged to take advantage of staff tuition rates. The eligibility requirements are listed in the OUS Fee Book under staff rates for tuition and are referred to in OIT-21-310.

Funding for Participation in Educational/Developmental Activities

Departments may pay for the cost of courses, conferences and educational/developmental activities from their budgets, if a decision is made that the activity will benefit its operational effectiveness. Employees who, as a condition of employment, must take courses or classes in order to maintain licenses or keep certification current are excluded from any subsidy under this policy. Expenditures that would involve out-of-state travel are governed by regulations that require advance approval. If staff members are required, as part of their duties, to participate in an educational/developmental activity, the cost will be reimbursed or paid by the department.

Recommended:

President's Council – 4/14/98

Approved: Martha Anne Dow
Martha Anne Dow, President

Date: June 16, 1998