

**INTERIM
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
PLAN**

**NAVAJO TECHNICAL
UNIVERSITY**



August 2015- May 2016

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I. Introduction

This Interim Professional Development Plan shall be in effect when approved by the Navajo Technical University Board of Regents until the end of the NTU 2016 Fiscal Year (i.e., May 31, 2016). In view of the time period during which the Interim PDP shall be in effect, participants of PDP shall be limited to those employees currently participating (those approved in AY 2015) in the PDP.

Professional development is the continuous process of acquiring new knowledge and skills that relate to one's profession or job responsibilities. It plays a key role in maintaining qualified, trained, informed and motivated employees.

Navajo Technical University (NTU) encourages its employees to participate in professional development activities. The objectives of professional development are to help employees enhance their job skills, obtain job-related knowledge and information, and increase productivity and efficiency. In the case of faculty members, it also provides an opportunity for classroom skill enhancement and increased knowledge in their specific academic discipline.

NTU employees currently participating in the PDP must develop a professional development plan (PDP) for the 2016 Fiscal Year. The primary purposes for the development of a professional development plan are as follows:

- Accountability
- Quality instruction and support services
- Accreditation
- Professional growth
- Sharing of ideas and dissemination of good practice
- Building strong and effective teams

The Human Resources Department oversees and monitors the PDP activities for employees that include faculty and staff members. The PDP Committee membership is recommended to and confirmed by the NTU President and works closely with the Human Resources Department.

In 2006, NTU, then known as the Crownpoint Institute of Technology, first established the PDP in order to increase its quality of teaching as the institution sought accreditation and began evolving toward offering 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 certification or other certification. At the time, vocational and trades programs were the main focus. Over the years the institution evolved into Navajo Technical College and in 2013, it became Navajo Technical University. As the institution changed, its training needs also changed and the hiring of highly qualified faculty and staff became a priority to ensure the highest quality of instruction and service to the Navajo Nation and beyond.

The PDP policy was first developed when NTU had a small number of faculty and staff to serve an enrollment of a few hundred and at that time, the funds required to assist each employee were sufficient. As the University grew, there was a concurrent need to prioritize the activities that are supported with PDP funds. The funds supporting PDP activities are limited and must target the NTU Strategic Plan.

A comprehensive assessment of employee professional development and training needs will be completed and used to develop a future Professional Development Plan that will target specific needs in alignment with the NTU Strategic Plan.

II. Requirements for Full Time Employees Participating in the PDP

The Professional Development Plan for full time employees documents how each employee will update his or her current job skills; this is to ensure that all employees are qualified for their positions. All faculty members must be qualified to instruct in the field or related field in which they teach. The faculty in certificate programs and in associate degree programs must hold current and appropriate credentials: minimally, an associate's degree, a journeymen license or other vocational-technical certificate. 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. Faculty teaching at the graduate level must possess a Ph.D. or an applicable terminal degree.

All full time employees, exempt and non-exempt, currently participating in the PDP shall prepare a PDP with their annual evaluation. This plan can include training or other activities that will better prepare an individual for his/her current job.

Current participants in the PDP program that enroll in a degree program must select a course of study directly related to their current job description. The name of the degree program and a full description of the curriculum for the selected course of study must accompany the request.

III. Procedures

A. Individual Professional Development Plan

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

The PDP consists of a plan designed for one year of activity that will be accomplished in the current contract year (i.e., 2016 Fiscal Year). Each PDP is developed to meet the current needs of the University. The supervisor, appropriate dean, director of Human Resources, CFO and NTU President must approve each PDP submittal. Each activity on an employee's PDP must be submitted and approved separately on a "Prior Approval" form.

Forms are available on the NTU website and in the Human Resources Department.

B. Criteria for PDP Approval

In both the development and approval of a PDP, the following must be taken into account:

- The activity is directly related to the NTU strategic plan.

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- The activity in the PDP is relevant to the professional development needs of the participant's position, or to a documented specific employment need within the university.
 - The PDP is geared toward employment requirements that must be fulfilled and that are not minimal requirements for employment.
 - The cost of the PDP activity is reasonable and can be supported by the PDP budget.

The manner in which the activity is to be evaluated and validated must be agreed upon at the time the PDP is approved. If the activity is not in keeping with an employee's specific job requirements or if the activity is not deemed beneficial to the employee's career goals or objectives, another course of study or training will be recommended. The supervisor may require an employee to seek specific training due to a performance evaluation.

1. Prior Approval of PDP Activities

Any PDP activity that requires payment by NTU must have prior approval from the employee's supervisor, the appropriate oversight dean, the Human Resources director and the NTU President, and the PDP Committee, where applicable. There is no blanket approval for coursework; each course requires prior approval to qualify for reimbursement by NTU. Prior approval is also required for courses taken under the NTU Tuition Waiver Policy that is referenced in the NTU Employee Handbook. Prior approval is also needed for any vocational licensure and certification fees. Requests that involve the PDP Committee must be given to the Human Resources Department at least thirty days in advance of the course start-up date.

C. Documentation and Validation of Activities

Completion of each activity will be documented by official transcript, and other relevant form of documentation that can be placed in the employee's personnel file as a permanent record. A report should be completed after each training or development activity. This documentation should be referred to during the employee's annual evaluation review. The documentation should be shared with the PDP Committee as a record of how the professional development activity has been applied at work.

D. Progress and Evaluation

The supervisor, department chair, PDP Committee and the Office of Human Resources may monitor progress on the PDP for the individual employee. If at any time, the employee's supervisor or department chair has just cause to believe that a participant is not progressing satisfactorily toward his/her required PDP goals or has failed to submit or resubmit PDP goals, a meeting with the employee and his/her supervisor and department chair will be arranged. At this meeting, the situation will be reviewed and recommendations made to guide the employee's professional growth during the 2016 Fiscal Year.

If specific expectations are not met, the employee's supervisor or dean of undergraduate programs or department chair may recommend administrative action to the president including probation, suspension or termination.

E. PDP Committee

The Professional Development Plan Committee (PDP Committee) shall consist of six members, recommended by the Director of Human Resources and confirmed by the NTU President, for the duration of this Interim PDP Policy period. Three (3) members of the Faculty Assembly and three (3) University staff members shall serve on the committee. The PDP Committee shall work with the Director of Human Resources. PDP Committee membership is considered community service and the committee members are not paid stipends. The Professional Development Plan Committee shall have the following functions:

1. Coordinate the delivery of certain training and professional development activities that are organized centrally for the benefit of University employees and that are aligned to the University strategic plan. Sexual Harassment training would be an example of centralized training.
2. Oversee the implementation and review of individual PDPs that involve pursuit of college degrees or college coursework to ensure compliance with the PDP guidelines approved by the NTU Board of Regents, and alignment with the NTU Strategic Plan.
3. Review individual progress reports, and develop an annual report on university wide PDP activity for presentation to the university administration and Board of Regents.
4. Coordinate with the Human Resources office for proper submittal of documents and progress.
5. Together with the Human Resources Department, develop a university wide training needs analysis and a centralized training plan that aligns to the University strategic plan. The assessment and plan will be recommended to the university cabinet for consideration.

F. Credit Courses and Fees Related to Certification or License for Trades and Vocational Programs and Unallowable Costs

1. Reimbursement for Credit Courses

- a. The extent to which a request for undertaking a degree program or college coursework that awards course credit, can be monetarily supported by NTU will depend on a number of factors including the following:
 - The relevance of the degree or coursework to achieving NTU's strategic plan.

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- 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.
 - Availability of funds in the NTU budget.
- b.** An employee earning college credits toward an associate's, bachelor's or master's 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. In order 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 Human Resources Department. Continuing students must also report on progress to completion.
 - c.** The cost of credits that shall be reimbursed may not exceed five credit hours per an employee's contract year for an associate's, a bachelor's degree, or a master's degree. Reimbursement by NTU for the 2016 Fiscal Year will be allowed up to: \$1,500 for an associate's degree program, \$2,500 for a bachelor's degree program and \$3,500 for a master's degree program. These amounts can cover tuition, fees and books. These amounts are not meant to cover full costs; each employee is responsible for supplementing the cost of his or her education.
 - d.** 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 one additional year for each \$1,500 for an associate's degree program, \$2,500 for a bachelor's degree program and \$3,500 for a master's degree program.
 - e.** Participation in Ph.D. or Ed.D., or other terminal degree programs will not be funded, nor will any employee's second associates, bachelors or masters degree(s), be funded by NTU, regardless of when, where or how the first degree(s) was/were earned.
 - f.** If an employee leaves before completing the additional year of service requirement, he or she will be legally responsible for the repayment of all tuition, fees, books and other costs on a pro-rata basis.
 - g.** 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.

2. Reimbursement for Trades or Vocational Instruction Credentials

Faculty in the Trades and/or Vocational programs and certain maintenance staff are required to have journeyman's credentials or other licenses and certificates for their employment. There are annual costs to maintain these credentials. The supervisor and PDP Committee will review requests for reimbursement for these costs. Each employee should be responsible for maintaining his or her own employment credentials.

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.

G. Policy for Training and Professional Development Not Covered in F

1. 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 HR office, visits to other institutions, participating in webinars, work shadowing, coaching or mentoring. The NTU performance review allows for review of work performance and input to staff development needs. The responsibility for identifying training and development needs is shared between the supervisor and employee.

2. There are many different types of activity that can contribute to an individual's professional development. Some activity is undertaken with the specific aim of enhancing skills, such as by undertaking training, work shadowing or receiving mentoring. Other activities offer the potential for development through involvement in a specific project or by discussing issues with colleagues. In these situations, the learning is greater when the opportunity is identified in advance, with attention drawn to the skills or principles that will be developed and considered, and for application in other situations.

3. The approval of requests for training and other development activity, not addressed in F.1 and F.2. 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 a number of factors including the below listed items:

- a. The relevance of the training and development need to achieving NTU's strategic plan.
- b. 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).
- c. The amount of training and development support that is reasonable for any one staff person to undertake in a given period.
- d. Availability of funds in the NTU budget.

4. An individual must pay for training and professional activity that is not directly relevant to his or her position at NTU by taking personal leave time and pay all related costs.

5. Employees are expected to update their supervisor and HR on their progress upon completion of their training or development activity by submitting a report, certificate or other

verification of completion. Staff and faculty members may be required to share with their colleagues on the outcome of their training and the resulting benefits to NTU.

H. Appeals Regarding Disputes or Disagreement

Disputes or disagreements concerning the PDP that may arise between the participant and the supervisor should be resolved at the lowest level possible. Issues that cannot be resolved at the dean or director level shall be treated as grievances and submitted and resolved as outlined in the Employee Handbook.

I. Files and Documentation

1. All PDP submittals require recordkeeping and documentation since they provide the basis for certification, re-certification, accreditation, salary increases and promotional opportunities.
2. 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 PDP as well.

IV. Amendments

The NTU Board of Regents may amend any part(s) of these policies upon recommendation from the NTU President.

The forms required for submittal and documentation of PDP for both faculty and staff can be obtained from the Human Resources Office or online at www.navajotech.edu.