

What is Professional Development?

The Teaching and Learning International Survey defines professional development as: *“activities that develop an individual’s skills, knowledge, expertise and other characteristics as a teacher.”*

For a college instructor, professional development means participating in periodic activities that promote development beyond an instructor’s initial or prior training level in the meta-profession of teaching, with some or all of the following purposes:

- the updating of knowledge in light of advances;
- the enhancement of instructional practices;
- the acquisition of new skills;
- the acquisition of pedagogical insights and approaches to teaching;
- the development of new instructional strategies;
- the application of more effective teaching methods;
- the ability to adapt and develop courses and programs;
- the employment of new and changing technologies;
- the adaptation of courses and programs to curricular changes;
- the development of new curricular strategies;
- communication and information sharing with other academics, and with persons outside of academia in related disciplines; and
- personal career growth.

How does one engage in Professional Development activities?

As measured in the GBC Faculty Evaluations, some professional development activities are conducted by the faculty member alone, some are conducted locally, and others take place in coordinated activities outside of Great Basin College.

Activities that a faculty member should participate in regularly on his/her own or with other faculty members include:

- **reading professional literature** (This may include journals, peer-reviewed papers, or theses);
- **engaging in informal discussion with faculty** on how to improve teaching;
- **individual research** on a topic of professional interest;
- **publishing or editing** a journal, chapter, book, or textbook;
- **participation in a professional society, professional organization, or journal editorial board.**

Local activities that take place at Great Basin College may include:

- **workshops** related to your instruction or expertise, conducted locally by GBC faculty or by outside speakers;
- **mentoring activities;**
- **peer observation**, together with fellow faculty members;
- **collaborative activities** with other faculty;
- **team teaching;**
- **grant-in-aid courses;**
- **department meetings.**

Professional Development activities that usually take place outside of Great Basin College include:

- **participation in teaching conferences/colloquia/seminars;**
- **presenting at teaching conferences/seminars;**
- **making observation visits to other community colleges;**
- **participation in a statewide network** through a committee or other process;
- **collaborative research** on a topic of professional interest.

Consistent with the regents' commitment to faculty professional development, and with the firm commitment of Great Basin College Administration, faculty members are able to participate in professional development opportunities. The college may provide partial or full financial support for faculty participation in some of the above-listed activities. There is a pool of funds set aside every year for the purpose of supporting faculty travel to and participation in conferences and seminars. At most colleges, that money is administered by a committee consisting of faculty members – with the approval of administration. The GBC Faculty Senate Compensation and Benefits Committee makes recommendations for the disbursement of funding for faculty to take part in conferences and seminars.

How does one apply for Professional Development funds?

Applicants will submit electronically the following information:

1. the **Application for Professional Development Funds**, found on the committee website – with a signature of support from the appropriate department chair, dean, or VP (as applicable).
2. a completed **Scoring Rubric**. This too is located on the committee website.