

Faculty Senate Proposal FSP 2007/2008-01R

I. Proposal Name:

Creation of Individual Faculty Development Accounts

II. Stated Proposal:

The Faculty Senate requests that the University establish and fund Individual Faculty Development Accounts for every full-time faculty member employed by the University. Faculty would be free to use the funds in their account to support any faculty development activity including (but not limited to) the purchase of books, journals, other periodicals, travel, and equipment (both hardware and software). To ensure that the funds are being used to support professional development, faculty must receive approval from their Chairs (Chairs must receive approval from their Dean) for each expenditure. Faculty will begin each academic year with \$1000 of available funds in their individual development account. Funds will not be allowed to be carried over from one year to the next.

III. Justification:

This proposal would benefit faculty in several ways. First, it would provide faculty with more control over their professional development as faculty would be free to use the funds in their account for purchases that would most effectively promote their own professional growth. While some faculty development funding is available, some faculty needs still go unmet. Perhaps a faculty member wants to purchase some books or subscribe to some periodicals in order to remain current in their fields. Perhaps a faculty member wishes to travel to a professional conference not to present a paper, but to interact with peers at other institutions and learn from others' presentations. Perhaps a faculty member needs some additional hardware or software that will better enable them to help students learn. No one knows the needs of an individual faculty member better than that faculty member. This proposal allows faculty to better satisfy those needs and promote their own development.

Second, the creation of Individual Faculty Development Accounts increases the certainty of funding for professional development needs. Instead of having to wait for a somewhat lengthy and uncertain grant application and review process, a faculty member only needs to seek the approval of their Chair in order to receive funding. Furthermore, these Individual Faculty Development Accounts will aid in the recruitment and retention of quality faculty.

Finally, by involving the Chairs in the oversight process, those Chairs have more information about the efforts of individual faculty to continue to grow and improve. This additional information may aid the Chairs when performing faculty evaluations.

IV. Budget Implications:

The budgetary effects depend upon the amount of funding for each account and the number of full-time faculty. With approximately 440 full-time faculty, accounts funded at \$1000 would generate an annual cost of \$440,000. Likewise accounts that are partially funded at \$500 would generate an annual cost of \$220,000. It is important to note that not all faculty would spend all of their allotment, so the actual cost would be slightly less than these reported figures.

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