

Date: April 24, 2019

To: Noel Painter, Executive Vice President and Provost, Office of Academic Affairs

From: Professional Development Committee – Valrie Chambers, Barbara Costello, Ronald Hall, Manuel de Murga, Leander Seah, Mercedes Tichenor, and Tandy Grubbs (Chair)

RE: Professional Development Committee (PDC) Annual Report 2018-2019

PDC Membership, Reporting Structure, and Responsibilities:

Detailed within the Stetson University *Organization, Policies and Procedures Manual*, Section 2.6.O:

1. Membership

- a. Seven members of the faculty, including four from the College of Arts and Sciences, representing each of the four Divisions of Arts and Sciences, one from the duPont-Ball Library, one from the School of Business Administration, and one from the School of Music.

2. Reporting Structure

The Committee reports to the Executive Vice President and Provost.

3. Responsibilities

- a. To provide information on opportunities for professional growth for both individuals and groups of faculty through summer research, sabbatical leaves, seminars, and other forms of professional development.
 - b. To evaluate all faculty proposals for summer grants, and to make recommendations for summer grants to the Executive Vice President and Provost.
 - c. To review all faculty proposals for sabbatical leaves, and to make recommendations to the Executive Vice President and Provost.
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2018-19 Accomplishments and Action Items: Over the course of the year, the PDC met as a group a total of eight times. Our meetings included an initial planning meeting on Aug. 31; two informational sessions open to the general faculty, held on Tuesday, Sept. 4, 3 - 4 pm and Wednesday, Sept. 5, noon – 1pm; meetings to review summer grant and sabbatical applications on Nov. 7, Nov. 14, and Nov. 19; a follow-up meeting to review our summer grant and sabbatical application procedures on Nov. 28; and a spring meeting on April 12th to discuss trends in professional development funding over the last decade).

Summer Grant Applications: A total of 33 summer grant applications were submitted this year. The members of the PDC independently evaluated each proposal according to the summer grant rubric categories of *scholarly value, scope of project, value to the university, and qualifications and quality*. Using aggregate rubric scores to rank the relative strengths of the proposals, the PDC recommended expending the total amount of the \$135,000 summer grant budget toward funding 24 of the 33 summer grant applications – a 72.3% funding rate. A \$4,800 stipend was recommended for each summer grant award recipient.

Summer grant applicants were also encouraged to request supplemental expenses directly related to the grant project activities. The *2019 Summer Grant Information Packet* specified that supplemental expenses must be “directly related to activities done during the summer term of the grant.” The PDC interpreted this provision to mean that allowable expenses need to be incurred during (not after) the summer project activities. Consequently, supplemental funding requests to pay for conference travel and/or page costs/publication costs associated with reporting results of the project after the fact were deemed ineligible. The PDC also recommended against using supplemental funds to pay for research assistants, even if the assistant is a student (there is already the SURE grant program available to competitively fund student involvement in summer grant projects). Roughly half of the summer grant applicants requested one or more forms of supplemental funding, with many requesting these funds to offset summer travel costs. In order to maximize the number of summer grant awards across competitive proposals, the PDC opted to cap the supplemental award this year at \$1,800 (rather than \$2,000). Ultimately, 12 out of the 24 successful summer grant applicants received some level of supplemental grant support (up to \$1,800) on top of the \$4,800 stipend.

Sabbatical Leave Applications: Using a method similar to that used to evaluate summer grant applications, the members of the PDC independently evaluated each sabbatical proposal according to the rubric categories of *scholarly value, scope of project, impact on applicant’s professional growth/value to university, and qualifications and quality*. The PDC forwarded a recommendation to approve a total of 17 sabbatical applications (15 semester-long sabbatical leaves and 2 full-year sabbatical leaves).

Suggestions for Improving the Summer Grant and/or Sabbatical Leave Application and Evaluation Processes for Next Year: The members of the PDC are of the opinion that, overall, the application and evaluation processes worked smoothly this year. While things seemed to work well, the following three improvements to our processes are offered here in the hopes of instituting them next academic year:

1. Edit Summer Grant Information Packet to Clarify What Types of Supplemental Funding Requests are Allowable: The fact that approximately one-half of the summer grant applicants requested supplemental funding this year suggests that we were largely successful in notifying applicants about the availability of supplemental funding (this option was explicitly stated in the *Summer Grant Information Packet* and was also announced during our open informational sessions). While we were successful in advertising this option, the Committee is of the opinion that we could do a better job next year of clarifying what types of supplemental funding requests are allowable. As stated above, the PDC is of the opinion that ...

“... allowable expenses need to be incurred during (not after) the summer project activities. Consequently, supplemental funding requests to pay for conference travel and/or page costs/publication costs associated with reporting results of the project after the fact were deemed ineligible. The PDC also recommended against using supplemental funds to pay for research assistants, even if the assistant is a student ...”

To better guide future summer grant applicants, we recommend including a brief list of allowable and non-allowable supplemental funding examples as part of the next *Summer Grant Information Packet*.

2. Expanding Summer Grant Eligibility Requirements: During the 2018-2019 summer grant application/evaluation cycle, the PDC was approached by the Chair of our Department of Councilor

Education (Dr. Leila Roach) with a request that we consider how to make the summer grant eligibility requirements more flexible so that faculty from our graduate Councilor Education Program are eligible to apply. The problem that exists – these faculty often carry a heavy teaching load during the summer, and therefore they are not eligible for summer grants according to the stipulation in the *Summer Grant Information Packet* (page 3) that “*Applicants who are awarded a summer grant may teach one 4-credit course (or the equivalent) during the grant period. Applicants may not normally engage in any other paid employment during the grant period.*” According to Dr. Roach, faculty in her program typically teach two 3-credit hour courses during the summer. The healthy functioning of the Councilor Education Program is critically dependent on the utilization of their full teaching staff over the summers, which, in turn, bars those same individuals from summer grant eligibility. As a result, these faculty have access to fewer professional development opportunities and funding at Stetson. Yet these faculty are being evaluated according to the same tenure/promotion/merit criteria as all other Stetson faculty. This is an inequity that needs to be addressed.

As we consider methods for addressing this inequity, we might also want to use this opportunity to address a related concern. We have a few 12 month faculty on campus (such as in the library) who, by strict interpretation of the policy, might also be deemed ineligible for summer grants. How do we build flexibility into the guidelines so that these faculty are also eligible?

Perhaps the simplest solution for addressing both of these scenarios is to adjust the existing eligibility statement so that it reads ...

“Applicants who are awarded a summer grant may teach no more than one 4-credit course or two 3-credit courses during the grant period. Faculty who are on a 12 month contract (such as faculty in the library) are eligible to receive a summer grant, although the description of the steps and time required to accomplish objectives given in the proposal should clearly specify how the project will be completed around ordinary Stetson work responsibilities. As with all summer grant proposals, the feasibility of the proposed time management plan will be assessed as part of the overall proposal evaluation. Beyond the scenarios described above, applicants may not normally engage in any other paid employment during the grant period.”

3. Faculty Grant Writing Mentorship Program: Stetson should consider identifying a small group of faculty who could serve as grant writing mentors on the DeLand campus. The PDC, in consultation with the Deans, would attempt to identify five or six faculty members to serve on the mentorship group. Participation would be voluntary. Ideally, faculty mentors would be selected from across the schools, would include a mixture of junior/senior/female/male participants who have a reputation for successful grant writing, and who are not currently serving in an evaluative role (the group should exclude current department chairs and members of the PDC). The ultimate goal would be to establish a list of non-partisan, non-stakeholder faculty mentors from which applicants, if they wish to do so, could pick one mentor to work with them as needed for *à la carte* style, one-on-one consultation and review during grant development.

Special Study: Trends in Professional Development Funding over the Last Decade on the DeLand Campus:

Members of the Professional Development Committee (PDC) have been asked on occasion to respond about whether or not our summer grant and other professional development budgets have kept pace in recent years with the growing number of faculty on the DeLand campus. In an attempt to answer this question, we have asked several individuals on campus to help us assemble data about the number of tenure-track/tenured faculty over the last decade, as well as annual summer grant and faculty professional development funding (FPDF) budgets over the same period. In the case of the FPDF budgets (commonly referred to as ‘The Travel’ budget, administered through each Dean’s Office), we’ve elected to focus on just the College of A&S for now – since this data was relatively easy to access in a timely fashion.

Before jumping into the data, we wish to express thanks to Dean Tom Farrell and Executive Assistant Kathy Lanthorne for providing FPDF ‘Travel’ budget information for the College of A&S, Dean Sue Ryan and other library faculty/staff for providing information about the number of faculty on the DeLand campus, and Associate Provost Rosalie Richards for providing information about annual summer grant budgets. A disclaimer should also be offered here in relation to this information - we have learned that it can be a challenge to obtain an accurate tally of faculty numbers over past years (particularly contingent faculty, for which we have only attempted to count for the last two years), so please be aware that everyone has made a ‘good faith effort’ to generate as accurate a count as possible (primarily using archival information maintained by the library and information listed in the back of past Stetson University Catalogs).

Table 1 (Stetson University – DeLand Campus):

Academic Year	A: Number of Tenure-Track/Tenured Faculty	B: Number of Tenure-Track ‘Assistant Professor’ Faculty (Percentage of Total Faculty listed in Column A)	C: Number of Tenure-Track/Tenured Faculty in A&S	D: Annual Budget for Summer Grants	E: Annual FPDF ‘Travel’ Budget for A&S	F: (RATIO) Budget for Summer Grants divided by Number of Tenure-Track/Tenured Faculty	G: (RATIO) FPDF ‘Travel’ Budget for A&S divided by Number of Tenure-Track/Tenured Faculty in A&S	H: Annual Travel Price Index (TPI)
2009-10	176	26 (14.8%)	110	\$76,500	\$76,246	\$435	\$693	241.5
2010-11	169	20 (11.8%)	103	\$96,200	\$95,779	\$569	\$930	250.7
2011-12	169	26 (15.4%)	108	\$100,000	\$101,730	\$591	\$942	266.9
2012-13	183	37 (20.2%)	117	\$86,900	\$123,500	\$475	\$1,056	273.0
2013-14	188	47 (25.0%)	122	\$97,500	\$144,000	\$519	\$1,180	275.6
2014-15	185	45 (24.3%)	119	\$97,500	\$155,000	\$527	\$1,303	279.6
2015-16	186	59 (31.7%)	118	\$115,000	\$165,000	\$618	\$1,398	272.4
2016-17	188	67 (35.6%)	125	\$120,000	\$165,000	\$638	\$1,320	273.1
2017-18	191	65 (34.0%)	129	\$130,000	\$165,000	\$681	\$1,279	279.4
2018-19	184	59 (32.1%)	124	\$135,000	\$165,000	\$734	\$1,331	282.5

A: Total number of tenure-track/tenured faculty (this count excludes full-time contingent and part-time, adjunct faculty).

B: Total number of tenure-track faculty – offered here to help gauge what percentage of the faculty who are eligible for professional development funding are relatively new and perhaps more likely to require PD funding as they work toward attaining tenure and promotion goals.

C: Total number of tenure-track/tenured faculty in the College of Arts and Sciences (the count excludes full-time contingent and part-time, adjunct faculty).

D: Annual budget for funding summer grants. This data was obtained from Power BI reports that were generated by Stetson’s Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness and provided by Associate Provost Rosalie Richards.

E: Annual Faculty Professional Development Funding (FPDF) for the College of Arts and Sciences. This data was provided by Dean Tom Farrell and Executive Assistant Kathy Lanthorne.

F: Total Budget for Summer Grants divided by number of tenure-track/tenured faculty (DeLand campus). This data is graphed in Figure 1 below.

G: Total FPDF Budget for A&S divided by number of tenure-track/tenured faculty in A&S. This data is graphed in Figure 2 below (see comment 5 below for an explanation of the red data points in this graph).

H: Travel Price Index (TPI), U.S. Travel Association; offered here to help gauge the relative average trends in U.S. travel costs; this index closely mirrors the Consumer Price Index – Urban (CPI-U);

(https://www.ustravel.org/system/files/media_root/document/Research_Travel-Price-Index.pdf; accessed 4-22-2019).

Figure 1: (Column F) Total Summer Grant Budget Per Eligible Faculty Member

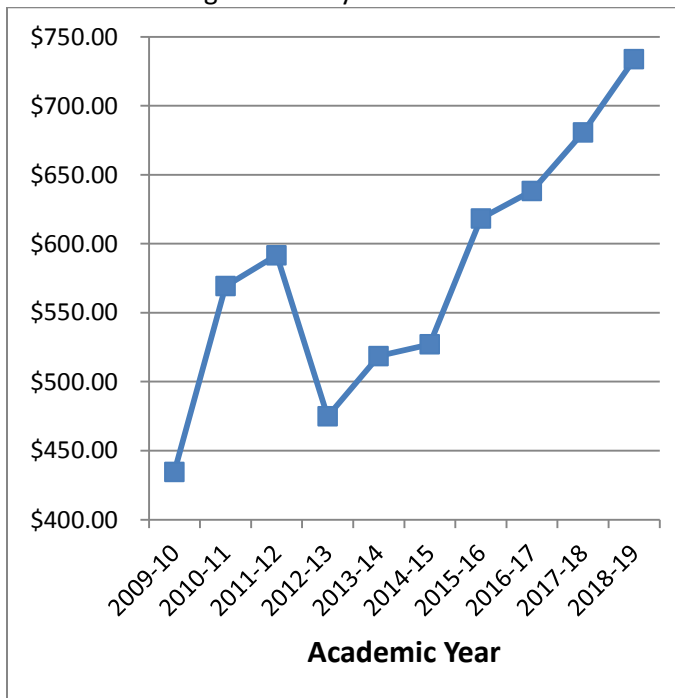
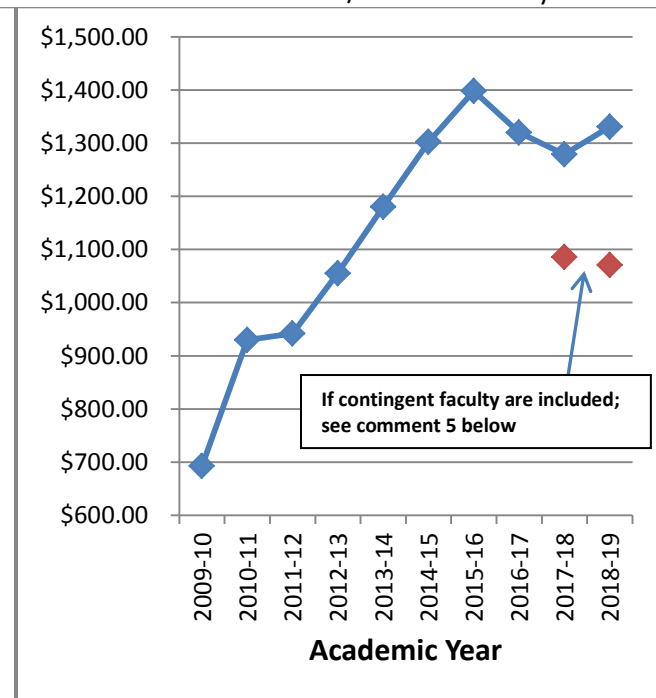


Figure 2: (Column G) Total FPDF ‘Travel’ Budget for A&S Per Tenure-track/Tenured Faculty Member in A&S



A Few Observations and Comments:

1. Examining columns A-C in Table 1, the total number of tenure-track and tenured faculty has grown by roughly 10% over the last decade. The total number and percentage of faculty classified as tenure-track (i.e., the number of tenure-track faculty in column B as a percentage of total faculty from column A) has more than doubled since 2009. There are currently a number of faculty searches taking place on campus to fill recently resigned/retired positions and other tenure-track lines that were not filled due to unsuccessful searches carried out last year and this year. Consequently, the number and percentage of tenure-track faculty may continue to grow moderately as those positions are filled.
2. Examining columns D-G in Table 1 and Figures 1-2, the annual summer grant budget has been increased by 76% and the FPDF budget for A&S has more than doubled since 2009, although it has been flat since 2015-

16. The overall increases in these budgets have outpaced the overall growth in the number of faculty and have resulted in a greater amount of professional development funding ‘per capita.’
3. Examining Figure 1, the summer grant budget is observed to increase substantially during years two and three of the time range displayed, but then falls back considerably the following year. This ‘bump’ in summer grant funding occurred because the Provost’s Office supplemented the summer grant budget to some extent during those two years with discretionary funds.
 4. The trends in the Travel Price Index (TPI) shown in column H indicate that the average cost of travel in the US has increased by approximately 17% since 2009. No doubt, the costs for international travel have risen accordingly, if not more. In order to estimate conference registration price increases, colleagues from our psychology, biology, and chemistry departments, as well as the library, have provided historical conference registration fee data which are summarized immediately below (averages shown here are based upon at least the five most recent years of registration fee data):

<u>National Conference</u>	<u>Average Registration Price Increase Per Year (Current Registration Fee)</u>
Society for Neuroscience Meeting	\$22/year (Current Registration Fee: \$420)
American Library Association	\$18/year (Current Registration Fee: \$335)
Ichthyology and Herpetology Meeting	\$13/year (Current Registration Fee: \$385)
American Chemical Society Meeting	\$30/year (Current Registration Fee: \$490)

The data from these four conferences suggest an average 53% price increase for registration over the last decade, far exceeding the 17% increase in the Travel Price Index over the same period. Taken together, the rising costs of travelling to and registering for professional conferences has far outpaced the FPDF budget increases per faculty member, meaning that faculty are more frequently having to pay out of pocket in order to remain engaged in an equivalent amount of research/scholarly activities.

5. Since approximately 2014, FPDF ‘travel budget’ requests and awards to full-time *contingent* faculty in A&S have become more commonplace. According to Dean Tom Farrell, “contingent faculty are [now] eligible for funding from CAS on an almost equal basis with TT faculty.” Based upon information provided by the A&S Dean’s Office, the number of full-time contingent faculty in A&S was 23 in 2017-18 and 30 in 2018-19 (this count excludes Brown Fellow faculty – not considered here since their professional development costs are often funded from sources outside of A&S). If we assume that full-time contingent faculty have equal access to A&S FPDFs and count them fully among the eligible faculty, then the FPDF per eligible A&S faculty member ratio calculated in column G decreases from \$1,279 to **\$1,086** in 2017-18 and from \$1,331 to **\$1,071** in 2018-19 (these adjusted values are indicated in **red** in Figure 2 above). Acknowledging that FPDF funds are now being used more frequently to pay for non-travel related professional development activities (such as subvention grants for publication), even fewer dollars are now available to fund travel related professional development.
6. One should acknowledge that there are several other budgets that are utilized by DeLand campus faculty to fund professional development activities, including Brown Center budgets, contingency funds administered through the Provost’s and Deans’ Offices, departmental operating accounts, and gift accounts. No attempt has been made here to calculate how much additional professional development funding has been expended from these added sources over the last decade.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION:

Summarizing key observations about the data presented in this special study and various conclusions that can be drawn ...

1. The number and percentage of early career, tenure-track faculty has more than doubled over the last decade.
2. Tenure-track faculty are mandated to engage in regular scholarly/creative/professional activities per our tenure and promotion standards.
3. All faculty are expected to engage in annual scholarly/creative/professional activities in order to be considered for higher levels of merit pay.
4. With rare exception, active engagement in scholarly/creative/professional activities requires annual travel and participation in off-campus conferences/workshops/performances/exhibits.
5. The cost of travel and participation in off-campus events, particularly the cost of conference registration fees, has far outpaced FPDF budget increases that have occurred over the last decade.
6. With full-time contingent faculty now eligible for FPDF on an almost equal basis as tenure-track faculty, the actually FPDF budget per eligible faculty member is actually smaller now than it was six years ago.

In light of these observations/conclusions, the members of the Professional Development Committee recommend that Stetson University undertake a campaign to increase the total amount of FPDF funding for eligible faculty at the DeLand campus. In the interest of preserving as much total support as possible for faculty professional development activities, the recommended increases in FPDF funding should not be accomplished at the expense of alternate professional development funding sources (such as, for example, by transferring funds away from the Summer Grant Budget). As part of this same budget reallocation process, the amount of FPDF funding should be re-normalized across the four academic units (CAS, SoBA, SOM, and Library) so that these funds are equitably balanced with respect to the number of faculty serving in each unit.