Student Development and Enrollment Services
Travel Guidelines for Professional Development / Continuing Education

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide professional development and continuing education opportunities for SDES employees so that they may maintain and upgrade professional competencies and skills, fulfill professional and statutory requirements, and meet certification and accreditation standards. The budget reductions over the past several years have made travel an opportunity that we have not been able to approve for all. In order to meet the goals, listed above, and hopefully to afford others the opportunity for professional development and continuing education, departments are encouraged to:

1. Offer in-house workshops and seminars that provide education, as well as required CME’s and CEU’s, to a large group at a low cost, and to publicize the availability of these programs to other SDES departments via e-mail and other means of internal communication.

2. Provide limited financial assistance to employees for continuing education and professional development according to current budget limitations, reasonableness of the travel and the needs of the department.

3. Seek appropriate approvals since many different variables will be considered by the departmental director, senior leadership team member and/or vice president when reviewing an employees’ request.

4. Encourage employees to travel when costs are remunerated by either a grant that has been awarded to a department or by external sources. This travel should be accepted and welcomed for our employees when fitting within our goals and objectives for the division and department.

Criteria for Attending Continuing Education Courses and Professional Development:

1. Many programs offered at UCF and within close proximity to the UCF campus are of exceptional quality and should be considered first when determining travel for professional development. Coursework at UCF is also offered to our employees at no cost (up to 6 SCH) and is also an excellent means for professional development and continuing education.

2. In order to be conscientious about cost containment, the following order should be considered when approving requests for professional development and continuing education:
   a. UCF provided workshops and courses, web-based and telecast workshops and seminars;
   b. Central Florida region;
   c. within Florida;
   d. regional level;
   e. national level.

3. Staff with administrative authority and responsibility will also consider the following guidelines listed in priority order when evaluating requests for professional development and continuing education. The travel supports the university, division, and departmental missions, and:
   a. the employee is gaining required CME’s/CEU’s or mandatory training in order to maintain their professional licensing or certification;
   b. the cost of travel is being paid or subsidized by a grant;
   c. the cost of travel is being paid or subsidized from an external funding source outside of SDES;
   d. educational information cannot be obtained elsewhere in a more cost-effective manner;
   e. there is documented evidence that skills acquired and knowledge gained will provide demonstrable benefit to UCF programs during the course of fulfilling one’s professional responsibilities;
   f. the employee has been invited to present at conference or workshop, or will be receiving a recognized award;
   g. directors are encouraged to send a team employees, as their budget allows, in the case of a national conference being held in the local area.
4. Approval for professional development and continuing education travel for SDES employees shall be determined on the following basis:
   a. If approved as essential and the departmental budget allows, employees may be granted financial assistance for professional development or continuing education, following the above guidelines, not to exceed $2,000 per fiscal year.
   b. If an employee requests financial assistance which exceeds this amount, it must be presented to the Vice President or her designee for approval.
   c. Staff retreats may be held at a local venue only. The cost of employee travel for staff retreats will not be considered, nor will overnight staff retreats.
   d. Any exceptions to this policy will require two levels of approval (the senior leadership team member and vice president, or her designee).

Procedure for Travel Authorization:

1. The director of the department may request approval of travel request(s) for employees, up to $2,000. He or she must take into consideration the budget constraints within the department and use appropriate judgment when doing so.

2. The director will also be practical in the number of employees sent to an individual conference or workshop, and must have employee’s who attend share information with others upon their return (see below).

3. Non-conference travel that is required as part of the employee’s everyday job responsibilities is not included in this policy and shall be approved at the discretion of the senior leadership team member.

4. Travel for recruitment purposes is also not included in this policy, and shall be approved at the discretion of the senior leadership team member.

5. Staff members may travel for professional development or continuing education at their expense, without having to take leave, provided it is relevant to his/her duties, approved in advance by the departmental director and senior leadership team member, and does not cause a hardship within the department.

6. Travel for all SDES employees has been severely hindered, and depending primarily on budget considerations, this policy is subject to revision or cancellation without advance notice.

Sharing of Information:

1. For those who are presenting at a conference or other event that has been paid by the university, there is an expectation that the employee present at the SDES Winter Conference or other professional development session within the division.

2. For those attending a conference or other event that has been paid by the university, there is an expectation that they also share information from the conference within the department, at a poster session, or some other form of discussion within the division.

Effective: Sep 1, 2010