

# COE Professional Development Assignments

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## Program Description

The Professional Development Assignment (PDA) Program at the University of Memphis encourages faculty members to continue their professional growth as scholars and teachers.

Faculty members may apply for a PDA for one semester, at full pay, or for one academic year, at half pay. Faculty being approved for a full academic year PDA cannot change to a semester after the approval has been granted.

## Guidelines for Professional Development Assignments Program

Faculty members interested in obtaining a Professional Development Assignment apply in the fall semester of the year prior to the anticipated Assignment. **Please submit your application by November 1st to be considered for a PDA during the next academic year:**

- All tenured faculty are eligible to submit proposals for Professional Development Assignments.

Faculty members submit an electronic proposal to the Dean's Representative with details of their development plan.

- Proposals should include a relatively brief but specific plan (two to three pages) for the work that the faculty member intends to complete during the Assignment period. This plan should include a statement about the expected benefit to the faculty member, the Department, the College, and the University and how the proposal aligns with the college's and university's strategic priorities.
- Current curriculum vitae must accompany the proposal.

- An application form must be completed and submitted through Qualtrics: [PDA Application](#)
- An endorsement memo addressed to the Dean's Representative must be submitted via email by the Chair of the faculty member's academic department. The memo should also include a list of courses that will need coverage and the level of graduate faculty status required.
- Faculty members are encouraged to seek additional, non-University support for the period of their leave, and attempts to obtain funds should be described in the proposal
- Faculty members anticipating financial support from external funding during their PDA leave should discuss this with their chair or director prior to submitting a proposal and include this information in the proposal. This would include support from another institution (e.g., stipends, housing, a travel assistance, other benefits); from a grant program that is administered through the University of Memphis (e.g., external grants to support the research while on PDA); or from a grant program that is not administered through the University of Memphis but where support will be provided (e.g., stipend, travel assistance, housing, other benefits).
- A faculty member on a full year PDA with sufficient external grant support can draw up to 50% of available funds from the grant that, in turn, can be applied toward their salary. However, the faculty member must have prior approval to draw against external grant funds at the time they sign their contract accepting the PDA. Incentive pay cannot be drawn during a PDA period.
- A faculty member who is awarded a Professional Development Assignment must agree to remain at the University of Memphis for at least one full academic year after the assignment is completed.
- Within three months after the end of the leave period, the faculty member must submit a report to the dean, describing the accomplishments and benefits of the leave.
- Faculty members who have had an Assignment approved under this program may apply again after seven years have elapsed since approval of the prior leave. A faculty member may apply after only five years from the approval of a prior award provided that he/she proposes to spend a full year on the Assignment, at one-half pay.
- In such a case, the Dean may approve the proposal provided there are sufficient funds in the one-half year of unused salary to cover the expense of part-time or

full-time instruction for the entire year.

## **Priorities Used by The Selection Committee**

- First priority will be given to proposals that advance the faculty member's scholarship and/or teaching and that show clear potential to enhance the faculty member's contributions to the department or division, the College of Education, and the University.
- Priority will be given to proposals that clearly specify the plan for work during the leave period and how the proposal aligns with the college's and university's strategic priorities.
- Priority will be given to faculty members who have not received a previous Assignment. At the same time, those faculty members who have received an earlier Assignment are encouraged to apply and those with strong proposals will be supported when possible.
- Priority will be given to tenured faculty members. For non-tenured faculty members, priority will be given to faculty members who have successfully completed their third-year review with a favorable recommendation.

## **COE Procedures: Professional Development Assignments Program**

- A three-member Professional Development Assignment Committee of the College of College, coordinated by the Dean's Representative who oversees the PDA program and reviews the proposals.
- The committee is made up of three Department Council members who serve for a period of two years and who represent the three departmental areas of the College (CEPR, ICL, and LEAD). Typically, one member is elected by the Dean's Leadership Team, one is selected by the Dean, and a third member carries over from the previous year.
- Depending on continuity of College Council members, this typical plan can be modified, but the intent is to balance the subcommittee between members selected by the dean and members elected by the College's Leadership Council/Team and to ensure all three disciplinary areas are represented.

- After each member has reviewed the proposals, the PDA Committee meets with the Dean's Representative overseeing the PDA program.
- Each committee member reports his/her decision as to whether the candidate (1) should definitely be funded, (2) should be funded if budgetary considerations permit, or (3) should not be funded even if there are sufficient funds.
- A supporting rationale is provided. If possible, the committee arrives at a consensus about each candidate.
- Based upon the PDA Committee's recommendations, the Dean's Representative overseeing the PDA program contacts the Chair/Director of all applicants and develops a budget for the cost of covering the courses of applicants who have been approved at either the first or second categories.
- The costs of covering each faculty member's courses and the total cost of the program are determined.
- The Dean's Representative overseeing the PDA program discusses with the Dean and the Dean's professional staff the substantive issues that emerged from the PDA Committee's review regarding the merits of proposals and the financial feasibility of funding faculty members who were ranked at the first and second categories.
- Based upon this information, a decision is made about whom to support for the upcoming year.
- The Dean's Representative overseeing the PDA program writes and delivers a letter to each PDA applicant by the end of the fall semester, indicating whether or not a Professional Development Assignment has been awarded. Copies of these letters are delivered to the Chair/Director of the faculty member's department/division.
- Faculty members who are granted a PDA sign a contract and submit this signed memo along with a one-paragraph description of the proposed work to the Dean's Representative in 215 Ball Hall.

### [PDA Application](#)