

# STAFF DEVELOPMENT FUNDS PROGRAM POLICY

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this Policy is to support continuous learning by University employees by providing a funding source for participation in work-related development and training. Such opportunities include professional development classes, workshops, and seminars where funding for such programs is not otherwise included in departmental operating budgets.

## ELIGIBILITY

All full-time and part-time staff and administration employees, departmental Director level and below, of Webster University U.S. campuses who have completed at least one year of employment with the University are eligible to participate. Temporary and student employees are not eligible for programs offered under this Policy.

## POLICY

Webster University is committed to the ongoing development of its employees and to providing an environment and resources to allow employees to develop and grow within the organization. Funds will be made available on an annual basis, subject to budgetary approval, to support employee development and training opportunities that are not otherwise included in departmental operating budgets.

Funds are available on a first come, first served basis, and employees are eligible to receive funds **once every other fiscal year**. Individual awards are limited to **a maximum of \$1,500.00**. WSA Staff Development funds **will not be awarded to any individual wanting to attend the same program more than once**, even if the content of the program is different.

These funds may be used to cover program enrollment fees, transportation, parking, meals, any required program components (i.e. books, printed materials, etc.) and lodging during the program. These funds may not be used to cover supplemental materials not required for program participation. Organizational membership or professional certification fees are not eligible expenses. Funds may also be used to sponsor on-site seminars and workshops at the University that benefit multiple employees. Requests for such programs will be considered as departmental requests rather than individual requests.

Meetings, conferences, or workshops put on by Webster University are not eligible under this Policy. Classes for college credit, as part of a degree program, or for professional certification are not eligible under this Policy.

Transfer of approved funds from one staff member to another is not permitted. It is the responsibility of the staff member originally awarded the funds to inform the Chair of the Staff Development Committee if the award will not be used. Awards that will be used to pay for expenses shared by more than one employee (i.e. hotel rooms, rental cars) must be indicated on the application. No expenses beyond the original award amount will be reimbursed/transferred without the approval of the Committee prior to expenditure. Any expenditure in excess of the maximum award is the responsibility of the award recipient.

The ultimate responsibility for personal development rests with each employee. Supervisors are responsible for providing support and opportunities for employee development and to discuss employee development goals as part of on-going performance assessment.

The University provides time off from regular duties for program participation. An employee must receive approval from his or her supervisor and department head before being granted release time for program attendance. Employees should not be required to make up time missed due to program participation and the time off shall not be charged to leave time. In granting release time, the supervisor should consider the professional development needs of the employee as well as the needs of the department for each request submitted.

A Staff Development Committee comprised of six appointed staff members, the Associate Vice President of Human Resources or his/her designee and the elected Compensation Chair will be responsible for review and approval of all requests for funds under this policy. This committee may be called upon to interpret this policy.

when considering a request that has not been specifically addressed here. The WSA Compensation Committee chair will serve as chair of this committee.

## **PROCEDURE**

An employee who wishes to participate in development opportunities under this program must apply by submitting a completed *Request for Staff Development Funds* form, along with a proposal stating how this program will benefit the participant and the department or the University. The proposal should include a copy of the program brochure or printouts from the conference web pages that describe the program content and associated expenses, including program registration fees, as well as airfare and lodging estimates. Applicants should describe in detail how the professional development opportunity would improve their skills and their job performance. The employee's supervisor and department head must approve program participation by signing the form before it is submitted to the Committee.

The Staff Development Committee will consider all requests for funds under this Policy. The Committee will notify each employee who has requested funds regarding the approval or denial of the request.

For all approved requests, the Committee will authorize payment of funds from a special Staff Development Account and request a reimbursement check for all approved expenses paid by the employee. Participants are responsible for submitting program enrollment materials to Accounts Payable. Participants are also responsible for submitting expense reports, along with all receipts, to the Staff Development Chair for approval and subsequent reimbursement. All airline travel must be arranged through Webster's travel agent (<http://www.webster.edu/travel/>). Employees using Purchase Cards for the payment of their expenses must send a copy of their Purchase Card statement and receipts to the WSA Compensation Committee Chair for approval to transfer funds.

Upon completion of the development program, participants must submit to the Committee a Program Evaluation form which gives a brief assessment of the overall effectiveness of the program.

## **ADMINISTRATION**

This Policy is administered by the Webster Staff Alliance and the Human Resources Department and may be revised by them as necessary.