

CAREER DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES AND PROCESS

The Career Development Program is a positive initiative designed to support professional growth and career development for the improvement of instruction, which is best achieved in an atmosphere of trust and cooperation. The application is designed to articulate the candidate's vision of their career development goals, as they also are aligned with and further the mission of the School, Library, and the College.

1. Scope

1.1 The Ramapo College Career Development Program applies to tenured members of the faculty. Professional staff on multi-year contracts covered by the AFT contract are also eligible to apply.

1.2 At Ramapo College, Librarians are considered faculty, and the Library has the same standing as other Units. Therefore, unless specific language referring to the Library and/or Librarians is used, the term faculty includes Librarians and the term Unit includes the Library.

1.3 Every five (5) years post tenure, in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:60-10 (Establishment of procedure for career development), all faculty are required to do a self-assessment of their teaching/librarianship, scholarship, and service accomplishments/work and contributions. The self-assessment may identify areas for improvement or professional development.

2. Purpose

2.1 The Career Development Program is intended to enhance and support the natural dedication of individual faculty members to pursue a vigorous program of continuing professional development after receiving tenure at the College. (See Section 3.14 Forms of Career Assistance.) It is structured to aid employees in the development of a positive program of professional growth and career development. So that faculty and professional staff are fully cognizant of the immediate and longer-range institutional, School, Library, and Convening Group goals and areas of high programmatic need and growth potential, the administration will make these known.

2.2 Identification of areas for improvement or professional development may result in the awarding of funds negotiated for this purpose. It is further recognized that a program of genuine career development for the improvement of instruction should be positive in nature and is best achieved in an atmosphere of trust and cooperation. The results of the evaluations of Career Development applications shall not be used as evidence in any punitive personnel action.

2.3 Faculty who intend to apply for retirement within two (2) years shall be exempt from the Career Development review. In the event they withdraw their intention/application for retirement, they will be automatically included in the next review cycle.

3. General Implementation

3.1 The program is funded by the College at the rate of \$60 per full-time faculty and professional staff covered by the AFT contract. Each year, the total amount of money will be made known by the Office of Employee Relations (ER).

3.2 Each year, one-fifth (1/5th) of the tenured members of the faculty will conduct self-assessment in the areas of teaching/librarianship, scholarship, and service. The cohort to conduct this self-assessment will begin with the most senior fifth in the first year and continue in order of seniority for each succeeding year. The process will be repeated beginning in the sixth year of the Career Development Program.

3.3 Specifically, faculty members shall undergo Career Development review after being tenured for five (5) years and shall be subject to review every five (5) years thereafter.

3.4 A follow-up review may be made by the All-College Career Development Committee (ACCDC) and the President/designee after each Career Development cycle to assess the process and effectiveness of the Career Development Program and identify areas for improvement.

3.5 Any tenured faculty member who is scheduled to conduct their self-assessment during the same time they are on a sabbatical or other approved leave from the College will be automatically included in the next cycle after their regular service.

3.6 Faculty (tenured, multi-year contracted) who are not undergoing assessment and where no areas of improvement are identified may submit applications directly to the ACCDC for Career Development assistance.

3.7 All individuals who are awarded Career Development funds will submit a report (attached) to the Provost with a copy to the Dean and ER within one semester after the completion of the Career Development-funded program or activity they participate in. The report will assist the ACCDC in awarding future funds.

3.8 All written reports and documentation including all responses will become a part of the record.

3.9 All materials generated in the Career Development Program shall be placed in the individual's file.

3.10 The Career Development funding may include, but is not necessarily limited to, the forms of career assistance listed below in Section 3.13. The candidate should discuss with their Dean all feasible options prior to applying.

3.11 There is no maximum amount of funding that may be requested. However, applicants should keep in mind there is a limited pool of money. Some proposed projects may receive only partial funding.

3.12 Funds for professional development may be available from the Federal government or from various private foundations. The ACCDC may make recommendations to the President as to how the College may seek out such programs and create proposals for submission to the appropriate agency.

3.13 Nothing in this agreement shall be construed as preventing the College from supplementing specific Career Development funds available where in the judgment of the College, such supplementation would be appropriate.

3.14 Career Development funding may be requested for the opportunities listed below, as well as other programs and activities.

a. Participation in approved courses or micro-credential programs – Note: Funding for tuition will be at the rate currently established in the AFT contract.

b. Travel to professional meetings, conferences, short courses, and seminars – Note: The faculty member need not deliver a presentation, host a panel, exhibit art, perform, etc., as is required when requesting Faculty Travel funding.

c. Career Development leaves, subject to the provisions of Article XXVII.B.4 through 7 of the CURRENT CONTRACT – Note: Funding for Career Development leaves will be at the rates currently established in the AFT contract.

d. Alternative assignments within load for research, study, and participation in other aspects of the Career Development Program. Note: Funding will be as established in the AFT contract.

e. Seminars, colloquia, and other internal programs relating to teaching techniques and methodology or topics relative to the improvement of professional techniques and methodology of other professional employees.

f. Funds to support equipment, travel and/or other items necessary for the successful completion of a career development project.

g. Other forms of assistance or programs where circumstances warrant them

Note – Not all funding opportunities may be available in any particular year.

4. Composition of Committees

4.1 Unit Career Development Committee (UCDC)

- The primary responsibilities of the UCDC shall be the assessment of the Career Development applicant's professional growth, contributions to the College, and teaching effectiveness in the most recent five (5) years and evaluating the candidate's plan for future growth and improvement.

- The UCDC shall consist of three elected tenured faculty members who are not in the current Career Development cohort or applying for career development assistance. -

- Nominations for UCDC members are taken at a Unit Council meeting for approval by the Unit.
- Only full-time faculty may vote for UCDC members.
- Members of the UCDC shall serve for two (2) years unless a Committee member is up for review.

4.2 All-College Career Development Committee (ACCDC)

- The ACCDC shall consist of the following members:
 - a. one (1) tenured faculty from each Unit who is not being reviewed. Note: Each Unit will nominate and elect its representative;
 - b. one (1) elected non-teaching professional;
 - c. one (1) representative appointed by the administration;
 - d. one (1) representative appointed by the AFT (ex-officio without vote); and
 - e. one (1) representative from the Office of Employee Relations (ER) (ex-officio without vote).
 - f. A quorum will consist of four (4) voting members
- The number of non-bargaining Unit members shall not exceed $\frac{1}{3}$ of the overall composition of the committee.
- Those who are in the current Career Development cohort may not serve on the ACCDC.
- Elected members of the ACCDC shall serve two-year terms except for the initial year when two members shall serve one-year terms. This will ensure continuity from year to year.
- The chairperson of the ACCDC shall be a member of the bargaining Unit and must be elected by the ACCDC.

5. Criteria and Documentation for Assessment Review

5.1 The ACCDC will review Career Development submissions/applications in the following order:

- a. submissions and proposals from applicants in the Career Development cohort; then
- b. proposals submitted by those who are not in the Career Development cohort (will have a lower priority).

5.2 Assessment Documentation

Documentation used for assessment include:

- a. A comprehensive self-assessment statement, which will provide an overview of the applicant's professional activities during the five (5)-year period preceding the assessment and addressing the criteria

in Section 5.0 in this handbook. This statement may include qualitative statements from student opinion surveys and may include a proposal for a plan of career development that requests financial support/assistance, as needed. The proposal should describe development in identified areas for improvement in teaching/librarianship or acquiring new knowledge in a teaching area, or furthering the mission of the School, Library, and/or the College. This statement should be three (3) to no more than five (5) pages in length using eleven (11)-point Times New Roman font.

- b. Supporting documentation, as per the Checklist and Section 5.0 in the Faculty Handbook.

6. Procedure for Career Development

6.1 Each spring, the Office of Employee Relations (ER) will notify members of the cohort that is scheduled for Career Development in the following academic year (AY), as well as members of the cohort scheduled for Career Development in the AY after that. (In other words, faculty will have approximately 6-month and 18-month reminders/notification periods.) Further, both cohorts will receive the same notification in September when the Career Development information session is delivered. This allows those scheduled for Career Development in the current year *and* those scheduled for Career Development in the following year to attend the same information session.

6.2 Consultation with the Dean

- a. The Dean will arrange to meet with everyone in the Career Development cohort to discuss their accomplishments and contributions, as related to the three (3) areas of criteria over the past five (5) years. The mission, goals, and objectives of their primary program, their School, Library, and College and areas for improvement may also be discussed.

- b. Those who are in the Career Development cohort submit a completed Common Application form (attached) and documentation in accordance with established procedures. <https://www.ramapo.edu/er/wp-content/uploads/sites/81/2023/08/APPENDIX-G-COMMON-APPLICATION-FORM.pdf>

6.3 Unit Career Development Committee (UCDC) Procedures

6.3.1 The UCDC reviews and evaluates each Career Development application in accordance with the criteria. Improvement to teaching/librarianship will be given highest priority for any requested funding.

6.3.2 Assessments shall be based on evidence of an individual's professional performance during the five-year period preceding the assessment.

6.3.3 Prior to preparing its letter, the UCDC may meet with the Career Development applicant to discuss their self-assessment and/or any documentation submitted and to solicit additional evidence or information if this is deemed necessary by the Committee.

6.3.4 The UCDC shall prepare a letter for each Career Development applicant that includes the following:

a. a summary of the individual's professional growth and professional performance and contributions, which should include contributions to the Convening Group, School, Library, and College during the preceding five (5) years, as well as the individual's intentions for future professional growth and contributions;

b. an identification of the individual's strengths and teaching/librarianship effectiveness, as conveyed through the applicant's self-assessment statement and supporting documentation;

c. a specific and detailed identification of areas for improvement, if any exist; in areas for improvement exist, the report shall explicitly so state; and

d. the letter may also include a recommendation for Career Development, which is tailored to the applicant's needs. Such recommendations are not to be construed as indicating deficiencies. If the UCDC prepares such a recommendation, the Committee shall consult first with the applicant.

6.3.5 The UCDC letter shall be submitted to the Career Development applicant. Within five (5) calendar days after the letter is shared, the Career Development applicant may present a written request to the UCDC to reconsider its recommendation. In the request, the individual shall state the specific reasons why they feel that the recommendation is inappropriate. The UCDC shall consider the request and make a final recommendation.

6.3.6 It is the responsibility of the UCDC to ensure that all information relating to the assessment review of the faculty member is forwarded to subsequent levels as per the guidelines established in the Career Development calendar.

7. All-College Career Development Committee (ACCDC) Procedures

7.1 The ACCDC shall receive and consider the UCDC letters written about Career Development applicants and shall prepare recommendations.

7.2 The ACCDC shall consider first the applications of faculty in the current Career Development cohort, then professional staff who submitted a Career Development funding request, and lastly faculty who are not in the current Career Development cohort but submit a Career Development funding request. The ACCDC may request additional information from the applicant through the Unit representative.

7.3 The ACCDC will notify each Career Development applicant of its recommendation in writing.

7.4 The ACCDC submits its recommendations to the Provost by the deadline established by current calendar as posted on the ER website.

8. Provost Review

8.1 The Provost shall review all documents received from the ACCDC and may request additional information from the ACCDC.

8.2 The Provost may or may not approve the ACCDC recommendation. In the event the Provost modifies or rejects any of the ACCDC's recommendations, the Provost shall set forth in writing relevant reasons for the discrepancy, which is sent to the ACCDC and the affected Career Development applicant.

8.3 The ACCDC may request a meeting with the Provost (i.e., in response to denials of funding) within five (5) business days.

9. Fair and Equitable Application of Procedures

9.1 The procedures for conducting Career Development review and the awarding of Career Development funding/support shall be fairly and equitably applied to all Unit members.

9.2 Violations are grievable under Article VII.B.1 of the CURRENT CONTRACT

9.3 If an arbitrator determines that a violation has occurred, the matter may be:

a. remanded to the appropriate level for reconsideration, or

b. set aside and a request made that the Career Development review process be re-done in its entirety *de novo* (from the beginning). If this occurs, the affected individual will be included in the next Career Development cohort. Any records or material related to the original assessment/cycle will not be included in the individual's personnel file.