School of Engineering

Faculty Professional Development Fund Policy

I. Purpose

The School of Engineering is committed to supporting the continued growth and success of its faculty through annual Professional Development (PD) funding. This investment reflects the University's commitment to excellence in teaching, scholarship, and service by providing resources that enable faculty to expand their knowledge, strengthen their research programs, develop new skills, engage with professional communities, and bring new ideas back to the classroom, laboratory, and University community.

PD funds are University resources entrusted to faculty to support professional development in teaching, scholarship, and service. Their use must comply with this policy and all applicable University policies. Faculty are expected to exercise thoughtful stewardship of these limited institutional resources through responsible planning, timely reconciliation, and compliance with all University financial, procurement, travel, and accounting policies. This policy establishes clear expectations to ensure equitable administration of PD funds and responsible stewardship of University resources.

II. Scope

This policy applies to all School of Engineering faculty receiving annual Professional Development funding. All faculty who receive annual Professional Development funding are expected to review, be familiar with, and comply with the requirements of this policy. University policies governing travel, procurement, purchasing, reimbursement, accounting, tax regulations, and sponsored research shall supersede this document whenever applicable. This policy may be revised periodically to reflect changes in University policy, applicable law, or administrative practice.

III. Funding Levels and Eligibility

Professional Development (PD) funding is allocated annually, subject to available School resources and applicable University policies.

Tenure-Track and Tenured Faculty: The School of Engineering provides annual Professional Development funding to eligible tenure-track and tenured faculty. The amount of funding is established annually by the School based on available operational resources and institutional priorities. As such, the annual allocation is not guaranteed and may increase, decrease, or otherwise be adjusted from year to year.

Non-Tenure-Track Faculty: Eligible non-tenure-track (NTT) faculty shall receive annual Professional Development funding in accordance with the terms of the applicable Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA). Where the School of Engineering elects to provide funding beyond the amount required by the CBA, such supplemental funding is discretionary, subject to available operational resources, and may be modified or discontinued from year to year.

Proration of Funding: Professional Development funding is intended to support faculty in proportion to their assigned appointment. Faculty whose appointments are less than full-time, or whose active service is reduced during the fiscal year, will receive a prorated Professional Development allocation based on the percentage of their assigned appointment.

Proration may apply to, but is not limited to:

- Fractional or part-time appointments.
- Sabbatical leave, when funding is adjusted under University policy.
- Leaves of absence.
- Phased retirement appointments.
- Mid-year appointment changes affecting the faculty member's percentage of assignment.

The Dean's Office will determine any necessary prorated adjustments resulting from changes in appointment status or assignment during the fiscal year.

IV. Definition of Professional Development

Professional Development consists of activities that enhance a faculty member's effectiveness in one or more of the University's three core responsibilities;

- **Scholarship**
- **Teaching**
- **Service**

Examples include conferences, workshops, professional memberships, publications, instructional materials, software, research supplies, and other activities that directly advance these responsibilities.

An expense should reasonably demonstrate how it contributes to teaching, scholarship, or service. Expenses that are primarily personal, social, entertainment-related, or unrelated to these areas do not constitute Professional Development.

V. Faculty Responsibilities

Each faculty member is responsible for:

- Complying with University policies.
- Monitoring available balances.
- Submitting timely and accurate reimbursements.
- Seeking guidance before uncertain purchases.

The Dean's Office provides administrative processing and guidance but does not monitor individual spending balances or assume responsibility for budget management on behalf of faculty.

Faculty are strongly encouraged to maintain a personal spreadsheet or other tracking method throughout the fiscal year.

VI. Allowable Expenses

As described above, Professional Development funds may generally be used for expenses directly supporting professional growth in teaching, scholarship, or service, subject to University policy.

Examples include:

- Conference registration
- Professional memberships
- Books and publications
- Professional software
- Workshops and training
- Travel associated with approved professional activities
- Student travel associated with faculty scholarship, when permitted by University policy
- Student mentorship and growth opportunities
- Research supplies
- Research equipment and instructional technology

- Computers, tablets, and other hardware purchased with Professional Development funds remain the property of Santa Clara University. In accordance with the University's Purchasing Handbook, Article V, Section B (Ownership of Goods), the University retains legal ownership and title to all goods purchased using University funds unless otherwise specified in the terms of a grant or gift. Such equipment must be returned to the University upon separation from employment or otherwise handled in accordance with University policy. Purchases may not be partially funded by both University funds and the personal funds of a University employee or student.

The examples above are illustrative and do not constitute automatic approval. All expenditures must comply with both the spirit of this policy and applicable University policies.

VII. Unallowable Expenses

Professional Development funds generally may not be used for:

- Personal expenses.
- Gifts or donations.
- Summer salary or supplemental compensation.
- Furniture or office renovations.
- Clothing, uniforms, regalia, and other professional attire.
- Cell phones or recurring service plans.
- Commuting or parking expenses.
- Student wages, stipends, payroll, or compensation *unless* for purposes of supporting scholarship or professional development under the faculty's mentorship.
- Expenses incurred on behalf of another faculty member.
- Transfers of Professional Development allocations to another individual.
- Expenses outside the fiscal year.
- Purchases made outside required University procurement processes when approved vendors or purchasing methods are available.
- Any expense prohibited by University policy.
- Meals as described below

Although collaboration is an important aspect of professional development, PD funds are intended to support the faculty member's participation rather than provide meals to others. The faculty member is responsible for adhering to the University Accountable Plan for Travel and Business Expense Reimbursements. As per the policy, the following purchases of meals, snacks, and refreshments are typically not allowable:

- Team-building, morale-building, appreciation, or celebratory meals or events
- Meals for student groups, research teams, colleagues, departmental gatherings, or similar group activities
- Coffee, snacks, refreshments, catering, or food purchased for routine meetings, offices, laboratories, or visitors.

Questions regarding the allowability of expenditures should be directed to the Assistant Dean for Finance, the Director of Finance, or the Assistant Director of Administration in the Dean's Office prior to purchase. The Dean's Office, in consultation with the Controller's Office and other appropriate University offices when necessary, retains the authority to determine whether an expense complies with this policy and applicable University policies. These determinations are final.

VIII. Fiscal Year Requirements

Professional Development funds are allocated for a specific fiscal year and cannot be rolled forward. Expenses for reimbursement must be submitted and fully approved by June 30, or the charge will be applied to the next fiscal year. The Dean’s Office may set an internal timeline for completeness before June 30 in order to ensure full reconciliation of charges. Conference charges are realized in the year they occur in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP), and planning with the Dean’s Office should occur before spending if your charges will hit in a subsequent fiscal year.

Faculty are expected to:

- Complete purchases within the fiscal year.
- Submit reimbursement requests within the Dean’s Office and University-required deadlines.
- Plan expenditures throughout the year.
- Avoid charging future fiscal year activities against the current year's allocation.

Unused balances are subject to University fiscal year close procedures and may not be carried forward.

IX. Budget Management

Each faculty member is solely responsible for ensuring expenditures remain within the approved Professional Development allocation.

Overspending does not create an obligation for the School, another department, or another funding source to absorb excess expenses.

Expenditures that exceed available funding are not guaranteed reimbursement and may become the personal responsibility of the faculty member.

Faculty should consider taxes, shipping, currency exchange, and other incidental costs when determining whether sufficient funds remain available.

X. Overspending

Professional Development allocations represent the maximum amount available for reimbursement.

Faculty members are responsible for ensuring that expenditures remain within their allocated Professional Development (PD) funding and comply with all University financial policies. Expenditures that exceed available PD balances or violate University policy create additional administrative work, including financial review, fund transfer processing, documentation, and reconciliation.

Minor overages may occur due to tax calculations, currency exchange fluctuations, or other incidental adjustments. Accordingly, overages of less than $50 will generally not result in an administrative assessment. Regardless of the ability to cover overage of PD funds, once an account is overdrawn, it will be closed for the remainder of the fiscal year.

PD account overages of $50 or greater will result in an administrative assessment according to the following schedule:

PD Account Overage	**Administrative Assessment**
$50.00 to $99.99	**$100**
$100.00 to $149.99	**$200**
$150.00 to $199.99	**$300**
$200.00 to $249.99	**$400**
$250.00 or greater	**$500 (maximum assessment)**

Administrative assessments are intended to recover the costs associated with processing corrective accounting actions, including fund transfers, documentation, reconciliation, and related administrative activities.

Administrative assessments must be resolved through one of the following methods:

- Payment from another allowable University funding source.
- Personal reimbursement by the faculty member.
- Reduction of the following year's PD allocation.

Faculty members electing to satisfy the assessment through a reduction of the following year's PD allocation will incur an additional $500 assessment, resulting in a total reduction equal to the administrative assessment plus $500. This additional assessment reflects the increased administrative burden associated with carrying unresolved deficits into a subsequent fiscal year and the risks associated with PD availability in subsequent years.

Compliance with University's [Accountable Plan for Travel and Business Expense Reimbursements]

All expenditures made with PD funds must comply with the University's Accountable Plan for Travel and Business Expense Reimbursements and all other applicable University policies.

PD funds may not be used for any expenditure that is prohibited under the University's travel and business expense reimbursement policies, regardless of available PD balances or prior spending practices.

Sponsored Project Office (SPO) Funding

Sponsored Project Office (SPO) funds may not be used to cover PD account overages unless the reimbursement request is accompanied by written approval from the Sponsored Project Office confirming that the expense is allowable under the terms of the sponsored award.

Absent written SPO approval, faculty members must satisfy any overage through another allowable funding source, personal reimbursement, or the administrative assessment process described above.

Repeated Noncompliance

Repeated PD account overages or repeated violations of this policy may result in one or more of the following:

- Preapproval
- Temporary suspension of reimbursement privileges
- Reduction or forfeiture of future PD allocations
- Additional administrative review

These requirements will remain in effect until a demonstrated pattern of policy compliance has been established.