

VIRGINIA WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY

Faculty Funding Guidelines

Fiscal Year 2021 (July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021)

The Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, via the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs, administers Faculty Development funds to support faculty participation in professional conferences, workshops, and other professional development opportunities. Additionally, faculty can apply for funds for course enhancement, particularly that supports remote or flexible instruction. Faculty can also apply for funding for pedagogical workshops or other activities that they feel will support their professional development. All of these requests are administered by the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, via the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Faculty can apply for funds as early as June 1 (for the 2020-2021 fiscal year) and should apply for support as soon as they identify the need. Once the budgeted funds are exhausted, no additional professional development funding will be available for any reason. Because funding is more limited this year, the process may be more competitive in nature. Preference will be given to virtual conferences that are less likely to be cancelled and are much less expensive. We are also unlikely to be able to fund attendance at conferences when you are not presenting a paper. While we recognize that these are important opportunities to network and remain current in your field, with more limited resources, we have to prioritize requests. A summary of changes for the 2020-2021 year are summarized at the bottom of this document.

The standard turnaround time for requests is two weeks, so please apply well in advance and notify the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs directly in the case of a last minute submission.

The following guidelines explain how one applies for and receives funding.

Note: Funding for summer research projects should be requested via the summer faculty development grant program.

GUIDELINES

Eligibility

Full-time teaching faculty are eligible to receive funding to participate in professional organizations and conferences. Faculty on Sabbatical are eligible to receive funds while on leave. Academic administrators or faculty pursuing development in support of an administrative/institutional initiative should seek funding through other programs.

Process for applying for funding

To apply, faculty should complete the on-line conference funding application form, which submits the form to the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs via the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Note that a copy of this form will be provided to the faculty member's Department Chair. When faculty will need to miss class to travel to a conference, they should consult directly with their Department Chair in respect of how his or her absence from campus and classes will be covered.

If approved for funding that in the end will not be used, the faculty member is asked to contact the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs as soon as possible, so that those promised funds can be allocated to other requests.

Purpose and Parameters

Funding to support faculty research and development

This funding supports professional conferences, conventions, or workshops supporting faculty scholarship and pedagogy. There are no geographic limits on travel. To the extent that funds are available, conferences will be funded in relation to these limits:

Faculty formally participating in a conference or seminar (i.e., presenting a paper, giving a poster presentation, moderating or otherwise participating in a panel discussion, or acting as an officer of the professional organization):

Up to \$1500.

Faculty attending a conference but not formally on the program.

Up to \$500.

Funding to support faculty teaching and development

This funding supports course enhancements, instructional workshops, and other endeavors that support faculty teaching. To the extent that funds are available, requests will be funded in relation to these limits:

Course enhancements (i.e., tools that support remote or flexible instruction, course packs, course materials, etc.)

AND/OR

Faculty attending workshops or other instructional events that develop pedagogical knowledge that helps faculty teach more effectively.

Up to \$500.

Note that the individual annual funding cap is \$1500. Faculty can combine different categories of funding up to the limits described above, but **the total for a given fiscal year cannot exceed \$1500**. In the past, some eligible expenses included travel (e.g., airfare, personal automobile expenses reimbursed at an institution-established rate); registration; hotel, tolls, meal expenses (excluding alcohol) to \$25/day, and other expenses as approved. At least for the fall, it is unlikely that conferences will be held face to face, so most faculty should be able to adhere to these limits for this year.

Where faculty elect to bring family along, faculty should request reimbursement for only those costs that would have been incurred as a solo traveler (e.g., for a single room). In the same way, a faculty member electing to fly indirectly to a conference site or otherwise extend travel plans for personal reasons will be reimbursed only for the expenses that would have been incurred without those personal extensions.

For this year, course enhancement requests that support remote or flexible instruction will be given the highest priority.

Process for paying expenses and receiving reimbursements

To the extent possible, travel arrangements should be made directly through the Director of Purchasing in the Business Office. She can assist faculty in booking air travel and hotels and pay such charges directly. For expenses that cannot be paid in advance, the Director of Purchasing can issue a purchasing card in the individual's name that can be used for other approved expenses. Where a purchasing card is not used, an individual can be reimbursed for expenses by completing a check request form (available through the Business Office), itemizing the expenses. To expedite purchases and reimbursements, the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs will provide a copy of approved expenses to the Business Office, such that individuals seeking reimbursement can attach receipts to that form, sign it, and forward it to directly to the Director of Purchasing for processing. Only expenses pre-approved and within the limits of the funding approved can be reimbursed through this expedited fashion. Note that reimbursements are only issued *after* travel has been completed.

Discrepancies will be forwarded to the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs for review.

In addition to providing receipts for reimbursement, faculty are responsible for supplying receipts for all expenses charged to the purchasing card (or, where issued, the University credit card). Mileage can be documented by a Google Maps or equivalent print-out of the most efficient route from the University to the conference destination. VWU Visa cards with receipts for all Visa purchases should be returned to the Director of Purchasing ASAP upon return to campus; requests for reimbursements of self-paid expenses should be made within 15 days of the expenditures.

Notable changes for 2020-2021:

- 1) The upper funding limit is reduced **and will be a hard cap.** In the past, some faculty were able to make a case for additional funding, when that was available, if they presented at a second conference, for example. That will no longer be permitted.
- 2) Fall professional development funding will prioritize supporting presentations at virtual conferences, as these will not likely be cancelled and are much less expensive.
- 3) Memberships will not be funded by professional development funding this year. This is a part of an institutional effort to reevaluate ALL memberships and cut payments to ones that are not required. Faculty are free to fund their own memberships this year. An exception to this will be membership fees that are rolled into conference fees.
- 4) Funding for the support of remote or flexible instruction will also be prioritized, especially this fall.
- 5) Once the budgeted funds are exhausted, no additional professional development funding will be available for any reason.

We recognize that this is a departure from our normal process, and that this will be inconvenient for faculty. Given that funds are tight, we must manage those funds to provide the greatest positive impact in the coming year. We encourage caution when making plans due to the uncertain circumstances. For at least the fall, we will be prioritizing virtual conference attendance.