

 <b>Wharton County Junior College</b>	<b>ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE MANUAL</b>	
<b>WCJC Title: Support Staff Professional Growth</b>	<b>Section D: Personnel</b>	<b>Page(s): 4</b>
<b>BASED ON BOARD OF TRUSTEES POLICY</b>		
<b>Policy Title: Professional Development</b>		<b>Policy: DK</b>
<b>Subtitle: Support Staff Professional Growth</b>		<b>Date Adopted: 08/01/2020</b>

## Purpose

This administrative procedure provides for the establishment of a professional growth program for support staff and establishes a procedure for disbursement of professional growth funds to compensate support staff employees who have successfully completed an approved professional growth plan.

## Procedure

### Administrative Authority and Purpose

1. Budgetary authority for the professional growth fund resides with the President.
2. Support staff employees may apply for participation in the Support Staff Professional Growth program when a) the credit-hour courses relate to their WCJC position, b) the credit-hour courses relate to the pursuit of a degree plan for an associate or advanced degree, and/or c) the certificate program or equivalent continuing education courses relate to their position and have been approved by the President or the President's designee. In all cases, however, applicants must present evidence that the proposed professional growth plan enhances the employee's value to the College.
3. Professional growth funds are to be included in the College's annual budget.

### Deadlines

1. An employee must submit and obtain approval of a Support Staff Professional Growth Plan Application Form (available at the WCJC intranet) prior to the start of each course included in the employee's professional growth plan.
2. Upon completion of a professional growth plan, a Personnel Action Form (PAF) requesting payment for professional growth must be signed and submitted to the Human Resources Department.

## Applications, Reviews, and Approvals

1. A support staff employee wishing to participate in the support staff professional growth program can submit a completed Support Staff Professional Growth Plan Application Form (available at the WCJC intranet) to his/her immediate supervisor. The application will include a description of the course(s), an explanation of the specific value of the request to the employee and to the College, and the employee's area of responsibility prior to signing up for the course(s).
2. The immediate supervisor, if he/she approves the Support Staff Professional Growth Plan Application Form, will submit the employee's application through the appropriate chain of command for approval.
3. Prior to enrolling in a course, an employee must obtain the approval in writing (i.e., by signature) of a Vice President or the President for his/her Support Staff Professional Growth Plan Application Form.
4. A Support Staff Professional Growth Plan Completion Form, along with all appropriate signatures and back-up documentation, will be forwarded to the Human Resources Department for filing in the employee's personnel file.
5. Support staff employees may not receive payment for more than a total of 18 credit hours in one fiscal year.
6. The Human Resources Department will notify the employee and the employee's immediate supervisor that the course(s) have been approved under the support staff professional growth program.
7. When the employee's individualized professional growth plan(s) has been completed, a PAF will be submitted by his/her immediate supervisor to the appropriate Vice President or to the President for approval. Attached to the PAF will be a copy of the approved Support Staff Professional Growth Plan Approval Form and either an official transcript or other appropriate documentation to verify completion of the professional growth plan.
  - a. For plans that include continuing education/non-credit courses, the employee should submit a copy of a Certificate of Completion and a signed Support Staff Professional Growth Plan Endorsement Form (available at the WCJC intranet), signed by the course instructor for approved continuing education/non-credit courses.
8. After receiving administrative approval, the PAF (with the attached documentation) will be forwarded to the Human Resources Department for processing.
9. A copy of the PAF will be submitted to the Payroll and Benefits Department for the processing of a payment to the employee for completion of his/her professional growth plan.
10. Once approved, the payment for completion of a professional growth plan will be included in the employee's paycheck. Personnel no longer employed full-time at the College will not receive payment.

## Eligibility Guidelines

1. Support staff employees are eligible to apply for the support staff professional growth program after six months of continuous full-time employment at WCJC. Under this program, support staff employees are eligible to receive a payment of \$1,000 for each nine (9) credit hours they complete. Each full-time staff member is eligible to receive up to a maximum of \$6,000 for completion of 54 credit hours.
2. A support staff employee's professional growth plan must contain courses that relate directly to a certificate program or to an associate or advanced degree plan. All continuing education/non-credit courses must relate directly to the employee's current position.
3. Professional growth plans for support staff employees will consist of credit-hour courses or equivalent continuing education/non-credit courses, as approved by the President of the College or by the President's designee. A support staff employee may be approved for a maximum of 54 credit hours.
4. A support staff employee's professional growth plan can be composed, in part or exclusively, of continuing education/non-credit courses. For continuing education/non-credit courses, a formula will be used to equate contact hours to credit hours. The formula will equate 16 contact hours to one (1) credit hour. For example, 16 contact hours of continuing education/non-credit courses times three (3) courses will equal 48 total contact hours. Then, the 48 contact hours will be divided by 16 to arrive at an equivalent total of three (3) credit hours. Professional growth plans containing continuing education or noncredit training must be submitted to the President or President's designee for review and approval. The President shall have the discretion to use the above-stated formula or another equivalency method.
5. There are no time restrictions placed on a support staff employee regarding completion of his/her professional growth plan. For example, if an employee completes six (6) credit hours in one fiscal year, those hours can be carried over into the next fiscal year where an additional three (3) credit hours could be taken, for a grand total of nine (9) credit hours needed for completion of the employee's professional growth plan. A payment of \$1000 will be given to an employee each time he/she completes nine (9) credit hours.
6. An employee can receive compensation for a maximum of 18 credit hours per fiscal year, or for equivalent continuing education/non-credit courses, as may be approved by the President or President's designee.
7. Only one course can be taken during regular business hours.
8. A support staff employee's professional growth plan must state how he/she will make up office hours used to attend class.
9. To be considered for approval, a support staff employee's professional growth plan must include a description of the course(s), an explanation of the specific value of the request to the employee and to the College, and the employee's area of responsibility.
10. Payment to an employee for completing a professional growth plan will be made only if the employee successfully completes each credit-hour course with a minimum grade of "C" or

better. For continuing education/non-credit courses, an employee must submit a Certificate of Completion signed Support Staff Professional Growth Plan Endorsement Form from the course instructor.

11. To receive a professional growth payment, an employee must provide a copy of an official transcript reflecting grades for courses or other appropriate documentation supporting completion of the courses listed in a professional growth plan. This documentation must be submitted with a PAF to the Human Resources Department. For continuing education/non-credit courses, an employee must provide a Certificate of Completion and a signed Support Staff Professional Growth Plan Endorsement Form from the course instructor.
12. Payment for completion of a professional growth plan will be included in the employee's paycheck. Only full-time personnel employed by the College at the time of this payment are entitled to receive payment for completion of a professional growth plan.

**Date Prepared:** 09/28/21 (RYB)

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