SUBJECT: Faculty Professional Development

I. Definition of faculty development

Faculty development is a process designed to improve instruction at Midland College. The process is designed to work closely with faculty evaluation. Our faculty evaluation process is designed to identify areas for professional growth in individual faculty. The faculty development process is designed to demonstrate that this growth and development has occurred, and that instruction has improved as a result.

II. Faculty responsibilities

Individual faculty members are responsible for promoting their own growth as teachers and scholars. Therefore, the faculty development process involves consultation between individual faculty members and their immediate supervisors, usually their division deans. Faculty members and administrators agree on the types of activities necessary for professional growth and development. Faculty who teach distance courses (i.e., online, hybrid, or MCNet are encouraged to participate in professional development related to teaching in this format. The basis for determining these activities will usually be faculty evaluation results. Because the faculty is very diverse, a variety of different types of activities can be considered for professional development purposes. The activities may include professional meetings, publication, additional post-graduate training, and studies in learning theory, professional performance, and exhibition of works.

III. Relation to the faculty evaluation process

By April 15, each faculty member must submit a professional development plan for the coming year. The plan is developed in consultation with the faculty member’s division dean or immediate supervisor. The plan is filed and included in the faculty evaluation for the coming year. It may be revised as necessary after approval. Faculty members must list activities which improve their instructional abilities, especially those instructional areas which may be identified as needing improvement in the faculty evaluation. Then, faculty members must demonstrate how those activities actually improve instruction. The primary measure of instructional improvement will be the subsequent year’s faculty evaluation. The process is driven by the evaluation results. While faculty members demonstrate improvement as instructors based on one year’s evaluation, they plan activities for subsequent years based on current faculty evaluation results. The evaluation-development cycle is therefore a continuing process.
IV. Faculty development activities

While each faculty member is individually responsible for their professional growth and development, Midland College will provide on-campus opportunities which promote faculty growth. Many of these activities will take place during the week before classes begin. The Midland College Professional Development Ad Hoc Committee is responsible for planning events which stimulate professional growth and development. These events may take place throughout the semester, so that faculty members can take advantage of opportunities which are conveniently scheduled.

V. Faculty Sabbatical

Midland College provides a paid leave program for faculty professional development. This program is addressed in Policy No. 02:01:08.