

PROFESSIONAL ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS (NFA proposal 1-26-18), Counter 03/12/2018

Section 1. Scope of this Article. This article addresses three categories of “Professional Enrichment” that enable bargaining unit members to advance their educational qualifications in pursuit of a higher salary grade, to fulfill workload requirements for maintaining currency in their academic disciplines and updating occupationally relevant skills vital to CSN’s educational mission, and to enrich their professional effectiveness through sustained engagement in planned projects of personal interest that also benefit CSN. CSN agrees to support bargaining unit members’ participation in Salary Advancement, Professional Development, and Sabbatical Leave by funding and/or administering these programs under the terms of this Article. This Article’s language shall not be construed as limiting or obstructing any new or additional opportunities for bargaining members’ professional enrichment which may be created during the time period covered by this Agreement.

Section 2. Salary Advancement through Additional Degrees or Coursework. ~~NSHE's provisions for Professional Advancement is as articulated by NSHE Code Title 4, Chapter 3, Section 38, and NSHE Procedures and Guidelines Manual Chapter 3, Section 3, shall be followed, with the additional stipulations in this Article.~~

(a) Bargaining unit members will inform their department chair and dean of their intent to seek Professional Advancement. With these supervisors’ approval and before beginning a degree program or credit courses, bargaining unit members will make written application to the Faculty Senate’s standing Professional Advancement Committee (PAC). Nothing herein limits bargaining unit members from applying for and using Grant-in-Aid to pay for approved course work completed at any NSHE institution, in accordance with Title 4, Chapter 3, Sections 11 and 12. Bargaining unit members will provide official transcripts to verify academic degree and credit course completion.

(b) Bargaining unit members seeking recognition of occupationally related course work will inform their department chair and dean prior to submission of their applications to the PAC within one year of course completion. Bargaining unit members must document attendance (contact hours) to verify completion of occupationally related courses. As provided in NSHE Procedures and Guidelines Manual Chapter 3, fifteen (15) contact hours shall be equivalent to one academic credit hour. From 60 calendar days after the ratification of this Agreement and on, bargaining unit members who have submitted occupationally related course contact hours, but who have not yet achieved advancement to a higher salary range, shall be provided upon request an accounting of total contact hours recorded to date, their academic credit hour equivalent, and the balance(s) needed to obtain future salary advancement. Incomplete or incorrect information shall be corrected within the one year time limit specified above, pending a bargaining member’s provision of evidence for contact hours completed and recognized by the PAC but not credited to his/her personnel record. Annually thereafter, bargaining unit members pursuing occupationally related continuing education shall receive updated annual reports of their progress toward salary advancement.

(c) Promptly after the ratification of this Agreement, both the parties shall jointly request that the PAC promptly expeditiously publish its criteria and procedures for evaluating bargaining unit members’ applications pursuant to subsections (a) and (b) of this Section

2, including making requests for reconsideration. Any changes to the application evaluation process shall not be valid unless published for at least 30 calendar days.

Applications screened and approved by the PAC are forwarded to the VPAA for final approval or denial. Approvals for salary grade advancement are processed through the Human Resources department and salary grade advancement is implemented with the next fiscal year's employment contract unless an exception is approved by the CSN President.

(d) The VPAA will provide a written reason for denying any application. The bargaining unit member may appeal ~~grieve~~ the denial.

(e) Accurate records for all bargaining unit members seeking salary advancement shall be maintained by Human Resources, in consultation with the PAC. ~~The Human Resource dept. will coordinate with the PAC to keep accurate records on these matters.~~

Section 3. Professional Development Enrichment. Bargaining unit members exercise discretion in devising, scheduling, and completing individualized professional development that meets workload expectations and professional enrichment needs through participation in conferences, meetings, seminars, workshops, discipline-related groups and organizations, independent study and research, publishing and creative work, public speaking and community education, etc.

(a) Bargaining unit members on "A" contracts shall have the cooperation of their supervisors to schedule time for professional ~~development enrichment~~ as set forth in the Workload Policy.

(b) CSN shall budget funds comparable to the amounts budgeted in the years immediately prior to ratification of this Agreement to reimburse travel expenses incurred by bargaining unit members who complete professional ~~development enrichment~~ activities pre-approved by the Faculty Senate Travel Committee and the VPAA.

~~(c) CSN shall earmark funding sufficient to provide financial or release time incentives to bargaining unit members whose professional development activities support critical areas of the College's mission through new or master course creation, course and program reviews and certifications, institutional accreditation, etc.~~

Section 4. Sabbatical Leave. ~~NSHE's provisions regarding sabbatical leave are as articulated in NSHE Code Title 4, Chapter 3, Section 14, and in CSN's "Sabbatical Leave" policy, shall be followed, with the additional stipulations in this Article.~~

(a) In the event that sabbatical leave opportunities may be limited or cancelled, CSN shall advise NFA-CSN of that decision and rationale as soon as practicable.

(b) In the event the VPAA's sabbatical approval recommendations to the CSN President deviate from a priority order set by the Faculty Senate's Sabbatical Leave Committee, the VPAA shall so inform that Committee's chairperson in advance.

(c) In the event that a bargaining unit member's application for sabbatical leave is denied, a written rationale for the decision shall be provided at the bargaining unit member's request.