Professional Development Fact Sheet

**Values Statement:** At the Institute for Public Service, we strive to attract and retain employees who are at the forefront and serving as leaders in their respective areas of expertise. We understand that the continuing development of our employees is an essential component of providing quality service to our customers and achieving the overall goals of the University. Therefore, the Institute is committed to providing our employees with the very best learning opportunities and resources possible.

1. While the University of Tennessee suggests that employees receive 32 hours of professional development each year, the IPS mandate is that each employee will receive 32 hours or more of professional development each year.

2. During the Annual Performance Review process, IPS employees will discuss their professional development plans with their supervisors, and provide their supervisors with information they may have on potential development opportunities. Additional professional development may be approved throughout the year by each supervisor.

3. Meeting the professional development requirement is an essential component of each employee’s Annual Performance Review.

**FAQ**

1. What types of classes/courses count toward the required 32 hours of professional development?
   - (1) professional development courses;
   - (2) conferences and seminars;
   - (3) E-learning classes;
   - (4) training held within departments;
   - (5) training provided by outside consultants/vendors;
   - (6) IRIS classes; and
   - (7) computer classes.

2. What classes/courses will not count toward the required 32 hours of professional development?
   - (1) Courses to receive college credit;
   - (2) Departmental improvements or changes presented at a staff meeting not related to professional development. For example, implementing a new specialized departmental form or sharing of knowledge to colleagues from a seminar attended by one or more staff members.
   - (3) Social organizations and church-sponsored programs will not count.

3. Does attendance at IPS agency training count as professional development? For example: can an MTAS employee who attends a CMFO course count attendance at the course as professional development?
   Yes, with the approval of the employee’s supervisor. Employees may receive credit for each class one time. Professional development hours may not be awarded for instruction time.

4. Does professional development have to relate to an employee’s professional area?
   Employees are encouraged to take a variety of professional development classes that enhance job growth and are not prohibited from taking professional development outside of the employees’ professional area. However, all professional development is required to be approved by the employee’s supervisor.

...continued on pg. 2
5. Do college courses count as professional development?
Under current University practice, college courses for credit do not count toward professional development. With the approval of an employee’s supervisor, college courses that are not taken for credit may count toward professional development.

6. I am a member of a professional association and attend meetings. Can I count networking with other professionals as professional development?
While networking is important and encouraged, it does not count toward professional development.

7. Can I count time spent reading journals, articles and books as professional development?
Time spent reading journals and articles does not count toward professional development. One hour credit may be awarded for books read related to their profession. Employees are required to do a book report to be published in the CatchUp. Receiving credit for reading a book would require approvals from employee’s supervisor and HR Manager, Tomi Rogers.

8. Does the time I spend volunteering count as professional development?
While volunteering is encouraged, it does not count toward professional development.

9. I am required to mentor new employees. Does mentoring count as professional development?
Mentoring is a valuable part of the onboarding process. However, it does not count toward professional development. Employees who attend training in mentoring may receive credit.

10. What are the guidelines for traveling in-state and out-of-state for professional development?
All IPS employees are encouraged to get professional development, whether in-state or out-of-state. However, all professional development must be approved by the employee’s supervisor.

11. Where do I go to find professional development opportunities? Are there recommended classes?
I’m tired of taking the same classes.
- UT Employee and Organizational Development
- UT OIT Training Courses
- Lynda.com Training Library
- E-Learning (Skillsoft)
- ATD
- UTHSC Professional Development
- UT non-credit programs
- IPS Learning Management System (K@te)

12. Are there any career path opportunities that can be achieved through professional development?
Lack of professional growth and lifelong learning can be a barrier to career advancement. Employees are encouraged to communicate career goals with their supervisor and create a path to achieve those goals.

13. What happens if I do not obtain the 32 required hours of professional development?
Failure to achieve the required 32 hours of professional development may result in performance improvement plans and continuing progressive discipline.

14. Do new employees have to obtain 32 hours of professional development?
New employees will have their required professional development hours prorated based upon each employee’s date of hire.
15. Do part-time employees (regular employees working less than 40 hours per week) have to obtain 32 hours of professional development?
Part-time employees will have their required professional development hours prorated based on their percentage worked. For example, an employee who works 75% time is required to attain a minimum of 24 hours of professional development annually. The required number of professional development hours for part-time employees based on their percentage worked is the minimum; part-time employees may exceed this number if the need is present.

16. Do temporary employees have to obtain 32 hours of professional development?
Temporary employees, student workers, interns, and public management fellows are not held to a required number of professional development hours. The supervisor of any person in these categories should be consulted regarding professional development needs.