

## CONTRACT TIP – PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUNDS November 2008

Other than the increase from \$875 to \$1200 in professional development funds, there are almost no changes in the language of Article 21. **No changes were made at the bargaining table regarding the uses to which these funds may be applied.** This collective bargaining agreement (CBA) reaffirms previous contract language regarding the need for departments to have a written policy.

Nevertheless, there appears to be some confusion on the campus regarding eligibility and the establishment of criteria and procedures for the distribution of professional development funds.

Please read Article 21 of the new collective bargaining agreement (CBA) which is posted on both UVM's and United Academics' websites.

The excerpts from the CBA that address the concerns mentioned above are provided immediately below:

Article 21(excerpts) states:

“2. Each department shall have a professional development fund *to support faculty travel for professional development or for use in other professional development activities....*Faculty members, including those on Sabbatical or Professional Development leave, shall have the right to apply for such funds for authorized expenses incurred in travel for professional development or for other professional development purposes...There shall be *written guidelines in each department* that make explicit the criteria and procedures for the distribution of these funds. Faculty seeking such funds shall apply in writing to their chair who shall make final decisions on faculty applications as to whether to approve funds or not...” (*emphasis added*)

(Note: The term “department” encompasses academic units without departments and the term “chair” encompasses deans or directors in units without departments, or their designees.)

Your negotiating team discussed the development of written guidelines at some length at the bargaining table. Both sides agreed that the responsibility for the development of guidelines lies with the department.

The CBA does not delegate this responsibility to the Chair. If faculty do not want others to develop the guidelines for them, they should become actively involved themselves.

In many departments around the campus, faculty are working in collaboration with the Chair in creating guidelines.

Feel free to share this Contract Tip with your administrators.

If you have concerns about departmental compliance with the contract in the matter of professional development funds, contact [info@unitedacademics.org](mailto:info@unitedacademics.org).