

Faculty Professional Development Report – 03/16/2022 Academic Senate Meeting  
Matthew Martin

Thank you to President Thompson and Senators for this time. Anne Donegan and I have been working alongside the Professional Development Committee to better organize and streamline the Flex process, and we're grateful to provide this update.

The first update regards the Professional Development website redesign. We are structuring the website around professional development themes first, versus modalities as has been done in the past. When you search for professional development activities you would like to complete, you will first select the theme – themes like DEIA, Citizenship and Democracy, or Teaching and Pedagogy – and from there you will be taken to a list of activities organized by modality with a small section dedicated to upcoming flex events. Our intention is to highlight and make it easier to find the important anti-racism professional development activities offered here at SRJC.

The second update regards the activity “Independent Reading, Listening, or Watching,” which has been mentioned before at Senate and on PDA day. Some additional context: This is a flex option faculty can use to receive credit for doing any reading, listening, or watching of materials regarding their discipline or DEIA work, with the important caveat that it must be outside of the normal prep we do for classes. You cannot obtain flex for your normal class prep. This flex activity was approved by the faculty professional development committee consisting of both academic senate and union representatives, meets the Chancellor's office flex parameters, is in line with what other colleges around the state are doing, and meets the SRJC Academic Senate Flex guidelines under the category “**Maintenance of current academic and technical knowledge and skills**” which states faculty can quote “Read and conduct research in one's discipline or related disciplines, beyond what is necessary for class preparation” as a Flex option. We believe this flex option eliminates unnecessary paperwork, demonstrates our trust in the professionalism of our colleagues, and allows the discipline experts to oversee their discipline specific PD. After all, who are the PD coordinators to tell an anthropologist which discipline specific texts should or should not count towards their professional development?

And finally, we are scaling up the current “on demand” flex options—which will likely be renamed to “standing” flex options -- we're still finessing the language. Essentially, these are flex options that occur every semester or every year, and rather than requiring people to resubmit sometimes as many as ten or more proposals every year, these will simply rollover. Some examples of current “on demand” options include SRJCFit, the Communities of Practice, and more—each automatically rolls over each semester. We are scaling this practice up to include activities such as the Arts and Lectures series, Women's History Month events, the Petaluma Cinema Series, and more. You will no longer have to submit a proposal for each event in the series or resubmit proposals each semester. Faculty will simply need to select the type of event they attended and the total number of hours. We hope these changes will save people unnecessary paperwork, time, and ultimately save the district money.

If you have an event or series of events you believe meet the flex qualifications and would like to see rollover each semester, please reach out to Anne Donegan, myself, or anyone on the professional development committee.

We are already seeing some wonderful enthusiasm for these efforts. In response to our email last week, we received celebratory emails of gratitude from dozens of faculty, classified colleagues, and even management. I believe one even said they were doing a happy dance.

Thank you so much for your time.