

- 3.7.3 The institution provides evidence of ongoing professional development of faculty as teachers, scholars, and practitioners. **(Faculty Development)**

Judgment of Compliance

Compliance

Narrative

Albany State University (ASU) understands the need and provides extensively for the professional development of faculty. First and foremost, the professional development of faculty is mission driven. As defined by the Mission Statement of state universities in the University System of Georgia, ASU shares “a commitment to scholarly and creative work to enhance instructional effectiveness and to encourage faculty scholarly pursuits, and a commitment to applied research in selected areas of institutional strength and area need” [\[1\]](#).

Board of Regents Policy on Professional Development

Further, the Boards of Regents has also established guidelines relative to the professional development of faculty [\[2\]](#). Each University System institution must create a faculty development plan which emphasizes the importance of scholarship and shall provide programs that include appropriate educational enrichment for faculty in each discipline [803.16]. The president of ASU has the right to grant leave “for the purposes of promoting scholarly work and encouraging professional development.” [802.0804 Educational and Professional Leave]. Faculty are also encouraged to participate in other avenues of professional development that not only supports the development of that individual, but also development that supports the strengthening of communities outside the institution, but that are also consistent with the objectives of the institution [802.1601 Occupational]. In full support of the development of faculty, the BOR has instituted a Tuition Assistance Program, provides for enrollment in courses offered through Continuing Education, courses offered though the Department of Technical and Adult Education, external professional programs and conferences, and also system wide/institutional faculty and staff professional development programs [802.18 Career Development]. Due to the strengthened emphasis that the University System of Georgia has placed on the professional development of faculty, professional development is a core component of the faculty evaluation process [803.07].

In order to meet the aims and mandates of the University System, as well as national and regional accrediting bodies, ASU has several mechanisms in place to not only support, but also ensure the professional development of faculty. Annually, new faculty participates in an orientation session specifically designed for them. In addition to the standard forms and paperwork needed for new employees, faculty are also made aware of faculty professional development opportunities which are sponsored primarily by the Center for Excellence in Teaching, Learning and Advising.

The Center for Excellence in Teaching, Learning and Advising

The mission of the Center for Excellence in Teaching, Learning and Advising is to provide broad-based interdisciplinary support to promote high levels of student and

teacher development. The CETLA provides a learning community that encourages continuous learning, innovative teaching strategies, research and professional growth. The Center's mission is to foster a learning community that will enhance the scholarship of teaching and effectively facilitate student learning. In carrying out this mission, the CETLA serves students, faculty, and staff. The programs and activities of the Center focus on promoting and enabling an environment where (1) faculty members are supported and encouraged in instruction and scholarship and (2) strategies that lead to higher levels of learning by students are identified and implemented.

In support of the learning community at Albany State University, the CETLA identified students, faculty, and staff as the three major groups of the community. Various workshops and seminars are scheduled by the Center to support each group with faculty and staff actively participating together in some of the same activities. The professional development of both faculty and staff is vital to ensuring a productive learning community. Faculty/staff development activities are scheduled each semester based on suggestions and needs identified through survey responses from faculty and staff.

Since 2001, the CETLA has provided various workshops, seminars and activities that support the professional development of faculty and staff. The workshops are designed to engage faculty in activities that address current teaching strategies, instructional technology, and professional development [3].

Other Professional Development Activities

In addition to the workshops, faculty and staff participated in the first literature review during the 2007 spring semester with a discussion of the book, *The Courage to Teach*. Participants shared and compared their teaching experiences with those listed in the book. This was a great way to share experiences and identify new teaching strategies to use in the classroom. The book reviews will continue each semester. Under a new initiative, Project Mentor, faculty will once again be able to share their experiences. Experienced faculty will mentor new faculty through the Faculty-to-Faculty Mentoring Program of Project Mentor. The initial training of faculty mentors began in June 2007. Additional resources for faculty are available in the Faculty Resource Library of the Center [CETLA Brochure, CETLA SACS Annual Report 2006-2007, CETLA Title III Annual Reports, CETLA Workshop Fliers, CETLA Workshop Attendance Forms, CETLA Workshop Evaluation Forms]

In addition to the services offered by the CETLA, faculty professional development is also provided for via the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs. This office has an annual competition for faculty research grants up to \$10,000 each academic year. Examples of the types of studies funded by these grants include:

- Pilot or feasibility studies
- Secondary analysis of existing data
- Small, self-contained research projects
- Development of research methodology
- Development of new research technology

These grants are provided via a larger grant from the National Institutes of Health [3].

Finally, faculty professional development is provided for via travel funds provided by the Office of Title III Programs. These funds are dispersed through the offices of the dean in each of the colleges on campus.

Each of the aforementioned faculty development programs are announced during the annual faculty/staff conference, advertised regularly via ASU INFO (the campus-wide internet-based information system), posted flyers and in college and department meetings.

Research grants require that faculty present their research and findings during the Faculty Research Presentation Colloquium held annual on the ASU Campus. These colloquia provide additional faculty/staff/student development opportunities for the ASU community as cutting-edge concepts and research findings are presented. Those receiving travel funds are also required to provide written documentation of their use of those funds and the knowledge gained from attendance at their professional development venue.

Supporting Documentation

- [1] [ASU Mission, 2004-2007 Undergraduate Catalogue, pg 9-10](#)
- [2] [Board of Regents Policies on Faculty Development](#)
- [3] [Faculty Research Development Guidelines](#)