CENTER FOR EXCELLENCE GUIDELINES

MISSION
Holyoke Community College’s Center for Excellence (CFE) supports a culture of inclusion, innovation, and collaboration through quality professional development and access to progressive technology tools. The CFE offers opportunities for employees to share and develop best practices to meet the diverse needs of our students and to foster student success through faculty and staff engagement.

STRUCTURE
The CFE is supported by the work of staff and faculty from the HCC community. The Assistant Vice President of Academic Affairs provides oversight for the Center for Excellence. Programming and training is initiated by the Staff and Faculty in Residence; the Title III Activity Director; the Director of Planning, Curriculum and Assessment; the Coordinators of Instructional Design and Technology; and Library Staff with support from the Title III Administrative Assistant. The team was formed to respond to developing institutional needs; to further the mission, vision and strategies of the HCC Strategic Plan; and to address current and emerging issues impacting faculty, staff and students. Professional development workshops will be hosted both virtually and in the CFE by internal and external experts; and all employees are invited to attend and present workshops and other events.

CFE ADVISORY COUNCIL
The Advisory Council will meet three times per academic year, and provide advisory services and support to the Center for Excellence staff. The Advisory Council will include representatives from the College’s Full Time Faculty, Adjunct Faculty, MCCC Professional Staff, AFSCME Staff and Non Unit Professionals. Participation on the Advisory Council is voluntary and members will serve two-year, rotating staggered terms. This participation is considered college service.

WORKSHOPS
The CFE Newsletter contains information and links to all upcoming programming, as does the CFE calendar of upcoming events on the Center for Excellence page of the HCC website. Some workshops may require registration, in which case participants should click on the event in the calendar to see detailed information including the registration link.

Supervisors and team members are encouraged to discuss and plan attendance at CFE professional development opportunities. Balancing schedules, coverage, professional development, college service, and other commitments can be complicated, especially during busy times of the year. Communication about plans and schedules is important. Supervisors are encouraged to support team members’ participation in CFE events as much as possible with consideration given to the needs of the department and/or program.
FACILITATING WORKSHOPS

HCC employees have expertise in a variety of areas, and have important knowledge, tools, best practices, and successes to share. We welcome any employee who would like to schedule a workshop, training, or event virtually or in person through the CFE to fill out the CFE Workshop Form. Events should align with the strategies and objectives of the College as outlined in the Strategic Plan.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND

HCC is committed to providing opportunities for its employees to grow both professionally and personally, and has established a Professional Development Fund to support professional development in alignment with the Strategic Plan. Monies for the Fund are allotted annually as available. The funds will be recommended for distribution by the Center for Excellence (CFE) ADVISORY COUNCIL and approved by the Cabinet per the Principles and Guidelines outlined below.

PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES

Professional development opportunities for which groups and individuals can seek approval and funding include local, regional and national workshops or conferences, classes or courses either face-to-face or in an online, webinar or other electronic format. Funding can also be used to host presenters or speakers, or purchase materials needed to achieve the objectives in the Strategic Plan.

A Professional Development Fund Proposal must be submitted to the Center for Excellence and demonstrate that it supports:

1. One or more strategies, objectives and/or action items of the Strategic Plan and 2. Provides professional enrichment for the employee and for the HCC community

All employees are eligible to apply for professional development funding. Funds are available in accordance with budget availability. The Professional Development Fund is a supplemental fund and is not intended to be the only source of funding for professional development. Applicants are encouraged to secure alternative sources of funding (i.e. department, grant, personal, etc.). The college’s Travel Policy and related guidelines must be observed.

PROPOSAL PROCESS

To access funding, a proposal must be submitted which outlines how the Professional Development will support the achievement of a specific activity in the Strategic Plan.

Please note, all requests that include travel must be submitted at least 30 days prior to the travel dates.

1. Meet with your direct supervisor to obtain approval to participate in professional development.
2. Complete the online Professional Development Funds Proposal Form. Group proposals should be submitted by one individual. A narrative proposal, along with all relevant documents including conference or webinar descriptions, etc. supporting your application will be uploaded
into the form.
3. Proposals will be reviewed on a rolling cycle, and applicants will receive communication of approval status by the Center for Excellence staff.
4. If your request includes travel, related forms must be filled out and submitted in accordance with the HCC Travel Policy.

FUNDING REVIEW PROCESS

The CFE Advisory Council will review all incoming Professional Development Fund applications. If your request is denied, you may submit a written appeal by emailing cfe@hcc.edu. Final appeal decisions will be made by Assistant Vice President of Academic Affairs, Idelia Smith.

POST PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT EVALUATION & DEMONSTRATION

Employees who are granted professional development funding must complete an evaluation form to be submitted to the CFE administrator (with a copy to their supervisor), within 20 days of the conclusion of the professional development activity. In addition, employees are required to explain or demonstrate what they learned by providing a publication, presentation, performance, exhibit, workshop or training session to share with the HCC community. Any alternatives must be pre-approved by the CFE Advisory Council. Demonstrations must be completed within six months of the completion of the professional development opportunity. Individuals who do not fulfill this requirement will be ineligible for future funding from the Professional Development Fund.