

**MEMORANDUM**

**To:** Viterbi Faculty  
*Timothy M. Pinkston*  
**From:** Timothy M. Pinkston, Vice Dean for Faculty Affairs  
**Date:** August 19, 2019  
**Subject:** Professional Development in Teaching and Engineering Education

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To encourage and help enable faculty to improve further their teaching and educational activities, the Viterbi School is continuing its initiative of supporting faculty members' professional development in engineering education and leadership, through the School's faculty development fund. The intended use of this fund is to help defray travel expenses to engineering education-related workshops and conferences of full-time faculty members whose load profiles include significant teaching responsibilities, to enhance teaching excellence and professional growth as instructors, curricula and instructional lab developers, and educational leaders within our academic units, our School, and the nation. The intended use is not for research-oriented travel except as related to scholarship on advancing pedagogy and innovations in engineering education. The School will cost-share equally with faculty member's academic units (departments or programs) travel expenses incurred to attend engineering and sub-disciplinary education-focused conferences and workshops (or related venues), typically up to two-thousand dollars per fiscal year for each faculty member who is awarded development funds, based on appropriate justification for the requested funds and the academic unit's support.

Eligible faculty may submit travel grant requests throughout the year, directed to the Vice Dean for Faculty Affairs. To receive full consideration, requests should be submitted at least a month or two prior to the start of the intended professional development event. Requests, which may be submitted via email, should include the following: name, location, and dates of the conference/workshop/venue; a link to the event website, if one is available; the faculty member's intended participation at the venue (e.g., (co-)author, presenter, organizer, other active role, or simply as an participating attendee) along with a brief description of the importance of the conference/workshop/meeting to the faculty member's professional growth (i.e., the main justification for traveling to the event); and a summary budget detailing the estimated travel expenses, including the dates during which attendance is planned, to justify the amount of travel funds requested. Endorsement by the academic unit's Chair/Director through cost-sharing should be included in the request. Higher priority may be given for active roles (e.g., being an organizer, (co-)author, or presenter), but some funds may be allocated for attending important conferences/workshop/venues if properly justified. To broaden participation, priority may also be given to junior faculty and faculty less recently awarded funds for professional development.

Faculty awarded professional development funds will be expected to submit travel receipts to their academic unit's business manager for reimbursement from an appropriate account and also, importantly, provide a brief written report (or oral presentation, if deemed appropriate) to the Chair/Director of their academic unit that summarizes key takeaways from the professional development event within one month's time of returning. Note: individual exceptions may apply, and this initiative is subject to future change at the School's discretion.

Through this initiative and other efforts supported by the School and its academic units, we aim to facilitate excellence in teaching and scholarship in engineering education of our faculty that exceeds national standards.

