**College of Marin**

**FAQs about Flex and the Flexible Calendar Program**

**2018-2019** What is FLEX?a.The flexible calendar is the result of an attempt to reform the college calendar without reducing the work year. Time that would have been spent in classroom instruction

under the

traditional 175

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day calendar is devoted to professional development and

improvement of instruction. FLEX provides a way for the State to fund activities

designed to improve the quality of performance at both the individual and the

institutional levels. Tho

ugh the state allows 15 contract days for FLEX activities,

Bakersfield College has opted to utilize 3 FLEX days.

At Bakersfield College, our Professional Development Council (PDC) prepares some activities each

academic year that are offered before each se

mester starts and often throughout each semester that

could qualify as acceptable professional development activities. We tend to call these options FLEX

Workshops. Other activities (conferences, workshops, coursework) would also be acceptable; no one is

required to attend the on campus offerings, but the sessions are convenient. Prior approval of an

activity as meeting FLEX requirements is not absolutely necessary, but the review process may raise

questions about an activity’s appropriateness.

2.

Why am

I required to participate in and report FLEX activities?

a.

Each faculty member is required to complete a certain amount of professional

development each semester or academic year. Full time faculty complete 24 hours each

academic year. Adjunct faculty comple

te 2 hours every semester they teach for BC, for

any semester in which they teach 3 units or more. Faculty are paid for this time as part

of their annual agreement, so how these professional development activities are

fulfilled must be recorded by the camp

us. If the hours are not completed, then absence

slips for the appropriate number of hours must be submitted to appropriately adjust

that faculty members’ pay.

3.

How and when do I report my FLEX activities?

a.

To verify the professional development hours compl

eted each semester/academic year,

each faculty member fills out and submits a FLEX Report Form (found on the PDC

website and the employee tab in insideBC) for review by the educational administrator

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in consultation with the chair. Forms may be submitted a

nytime throughout the

semester, but no later than the start of finals in December/May for adjuncts and no

later than the start of finals in May for full

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time faculty. Adjuncts submit 2 hours each

semester. Full time faculty submit 24 hours for the academic

year (8 for fall, and 16 for

spring, technically). Absence forms will be submitted for each faculty member who

does not submit FLEX activities for the required number of hours. Because faculty

members are being paid for completing these activities, each

submission must include

all the pertinent details about the activity (time, flyer or brochure, proof of attendance,

explanation

of how meets state criteria, etc.). Some logistics must be carefully

monitored to avoid the misuse of taxpayer funding. For exam

ple, if you have

professional leave to attend an 8

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hour workshop on a Thursday and you regularly teach

6 hours that day, you could only claim 2 hours of the time.

4.

What is the window for acquiring FLEX credit for a given year?

a.

The FLEX calendar follows t

he district fiscal calendar. As such, FLEX credit for a given

academic year can be earned from July 1

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to June 31

st

. Since FLEX documentation is due

by the start of finals in May, FLEX credit earned in May and June can be added to the

already submitted

FLEX form upon completion. FLEX credit earned during one academic

year cannot be banked and used as FLEX credit in subsequent years.

5.

What are acceptable FLEX activities for faculty?

a.

FLEX activities must fulfill one of the nine approved criteria designate

d by the state.

These include:

1. Improvement of Teaching

2. Maintenance of Current Academic and Technical Skills and Knowledge

3. In

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Service Training for Vocational Education and Employment Preparation

Programs

4. Retraining to Meet Changing Instit

utional Needs

5. Intersegmental Exchange Programs

6. Development of Innovations in Instructional and Administrative Techniques

and Programs

7. Computer and Technological Proficiency

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8. Courses and Training Implementing Affirmative Action and Upward Mobility

Programs

9. Other Activities Determined to Be Related to Educational and Professional

Development

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please specify

b.

Activities that faculty members at Bakersfield College

have participated in include, but

are not limited to:

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Attending a conference related to your field (All 9 areas could apply

depending on the nature of the conference)

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Attending Opening Day ceremony and department meetings outside of

the start/end dates of

the semester (Opening Day does specifically meet

area 9 and opening week department meetings could address several of

the state criterion.)

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Attending PDC

sponsored workshops (any workshop made available to

all campus members) during FLEX weeks (Can be link

ed to 9. Each

workshop will address one or more of the specific state areas)Attending

PDC sponsored workshops during the semester (Workshops address

separate areas. The faculty member should carefully examine the

nature of the workshop to best determine w

hich area is met.)

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Attending BC plays or concerts, Levan Center sponsored presentations,

or sporting events (1 hour max for attendance at up to 3 events, for a

total of 3 FLEX hours) (Area 9.) Participating in activities that promote

both physical wellness

and camaraderie with BC colleagues (includes

bowling and basketball) (4 hours max) (Area 9)

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Delivering a presentation at BC (NOTE: presenters presenting at a PDC

sponsored event receive double FLEX hours (1 hour presentation = 2

FLEX hours) (area(s) depen

d on the topic of the presentation)

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Delivering a presentation outside of BC (See above)

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Publishing a paper (3 hours max) (Possible areas include 1,2, 6, or 9)

Taking a course (Depends on the course and the faculty member’s

specific needs)

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Training in class

room research assessment techniques (# 6, or 8.

Possibly 2, or 4 depending on the nature of the faculty member’s job)

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c.

Activities that faculty members have participated in and that are not on the Approved

list may be approved upon written request to the edu

cational administrator:

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Steps for approval

1.

Prior to attendance or completion of an activity not included on the list

of approved activities, faculty members are asked to provide a written

request to their educational administrator for approval.

2.

If granted,

faculty members must attach the request with the

educational administrator’s approval to their FLEX form.

6.

What FLEX activities are not acceptable for full

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time faculty?

a.

Activities listed on the submitted FLEX form must not be activities for which faculty

have

been or will be compensated (by KCCD, BC, or other).

b.

Activity hours listed on the submitted FLEX form must not conflict with faculty members

assigned load hours (classroom or NT hours).

**What is Flex?**

* The California Community Colleges Flexible Calendar Program allows COM to set aside a specified number of days/hours for professional development (Flex) activities in lieu of teaching each semester. (Title 5, Section 55720) Each year, schools must offer a total of 175 teaching and professional development days, so each added Flex day means one fewer day of classroom instruction.

**Who must participate?**

* All full and part-time credit faculty must participate. This also includes librarians, counselors, the school nurse, and Child Development Program faculty. Faculty are paid for this time as part of their contract. Faculty who do not complete their Flex obligation and submit a signed Flex Verification form at the end of the semester will have their pay adjusted.

**What is my Flex obligation?**

* The Flex obligation is based on the number of units you teach, or, in the case of librarians, counselors, the school nurse, and Child Development Program faculty, the workload. It does not apply to overload activities such as department chair hours, IR&D grants, or other extra units. Flex obligation information can be found on your contract and on the Professional Development webpage.
* For fall 2018, there are five Flex days. Faculty teaching a 15-unit load will have a Flex obligation of 20 hours.
* For spring 2019, there are also five Flex days. Faculty teaching a 15-unit load will have a Flex obligation of 20 hours.

**When are the 2017-2018 Flex Days?**

* **Fall Flex Week – Aug. 13-17** This includes a mandatory Flex day for full-time faculty on Wednesday, Aug. 16 for Convocation and department meetings.
* **Fall Flex Day – Wednesday, Oct. 4** This will be a joint Fall Flex/Classified Staff Professional Development Day with a focus on issues of equity, diversity, and inclusion.
* **Spring Flex Week – Jan. 14-18** This includes a mandatory Flex day for full-time faculty on Wednesday, Jan. 16 for Convocation and department meetings.
* Part-time faculty are strongly encouraged but are not required to attend Flex week activities.

**What happens if a full-time faculty member misses a mandatory Flex day?**

* Full-time faculty are required to attend the mandatory Flex day each semester. A full-time faculty member who does not attend the mandatory Flex day must submit an absence report.

 **How can I complete my Flex requirement?**

* You can attend scheduled activities during Flex week, attend professional development activities scheduled during the semester, or complete individual professional development activities.

**What kinds of individual activities are acceptable?**

* There are nine approved criteria designated by the state.
1. Improvement of teaching
2. Maintenance of current academic and technical skills and knowledge.
3. In-service training for vocational education and employment preparation programs
4. Retraining to meet changing institutional needs
5. Intersegmental exchange programs
6. Development of innovations in instructional and administrative techniques and programs
7. Computer and technological proficiency
8. Courses and training implementing affirmative action and upward mobility
9. Other activities determined to be related to educational and professional development. These might include: attending a conference related to your field, serving as a club advisor, working with librarians to evaluate the library collections, giving an approved Flex presentation, participating in a Faculty Inquiry Group, attending a COM-sponsored presentation, and participating in activities that promote physical wellbeing and camaraderie with COM colleagues (max. 3 hours).
* All activities should be linked to the comprehensive plan for staff development and to the goals and objectives of the Flexible Calendar Program. In addition, the staff development plan and the flexible calendar program should be linked to the goals and mission of the college.

**What kinds of activities are not acceptable for Flex credit?**

* You cannot claim Flex credit for activities related to the normal preparation of classes such as selecting textbooks, preparing syllabus and class materials, grading, and meeting with students.
* You cannot claim Flex credit for activities for which you receive special compensation.
* You cannot claim Flex credit for activities that conflict with your classroom or office hours.
* You cannot claim Flex credit for participating in ongoing committees that are part of professional service to the institution.

**How do I report my Flex activities?**

* At the end of the semester, all credit faculty will need to complete and submit a **Flex Verification Form**. This form is available on the Professional Development webpage and includes information about scheduled Flex week activities and a place to record information about individual activities.

**When is the Flex Verification Form due?**

* For fall 2018, Flex forms are due by Friday, Dec. 14. You can put your form in the Professional Development mailbox in the Kentfield mailroom or email it to Flex@marin.edu
* For spring 2018, Flex forms are due by Friday, May 24.

For more detailed information about the Flex program, you can read the **California Community Colleges Flex Guidelines** on the Professional Development webpage.

If you have questions, contact Beth Patel at BPatel@marin.edu.