

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY

INTRODUCTION

The implementation of the Vision, Mission, and Values of the College, together with the Goals set out in the Strategic Plan, requires a firm commitment to the professional development of members of the academic faculty.

The Vision states that the College will offer *high quality accredited awards*. In this all faculty need to model the *professionalism* sought in our graduates. Further, the desire to *respond in a rapidly changing environment* can be met only if members of faculty are continually open to new learning.

The Mission Statement reiterates that the College will *provide high quality accredited education in theology*, reminding us of our commitment to *theological scholarship* and our role to *contribute to the public discussion of issues of faith*.

The Values of the College encompass *excellence in quality of teaching and research*, while affirming that academics also have a part to play in modelling *life-long learning and reflective practice*. Moreover, these values speak of the collaborative nature of the endeavours of the College, encouraging us to act with *collegiality and co-operation*.

A number of Goals in the Strategic Plan speak directly to professional development of the faculty, in particular:

GOAL 1	Curriculum Development and Change
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES, to:	Provide professional development opportunities which will better inform faculty as to how denominational differences and interpretations can be incorporated within the shared curriculum.
GOAL 2	Teaching and Learning
KEY RESULTS	A high quality of teaching and learning and the provision of opportunities and rewards that encourage faculty to be effective, innovative and reflective professionals.
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES, to:	Provide professional development opportunities to further the development of teaching competencies.

GOAL 3	Quality Assurance
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES, to:	Promote a culture of continuous improvement.
GOAL 4	Research and Scholarship
KEY RESULTS	A system for measuring the professional development activities of a member of faculty, including 'a triennial Conference as a compulsory part of the academic life of the College, bringing together all faculties and the broader community of learners'.
GOAL 5	Our Model
KEY RESULTS	Clearly understood and equitable processes to ensure our unity in the light of the diversity of our membership.
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES, to:	Identify opportunities for further co-operation among Member Institutions and develop methods to deepen the ecumenical relationship and theological dialogue among faculty.

Guiding Principles

Certain principles offer fundamental guidance to an overall professional development strategy:

- **Life-long learning:** A culture of life-long learning, particularly as applied to members of the academic faculty, serves to foster in staff a culture of professional development in line with the mission and strategic goals of the College.
- **Equity:** Access to academic staff development should be available to all academic staff. Availability must be equitable, fair, and inclusive, encompassing faculty who teach in languages other than English and also sessional lecturers. Appropriate professional development should also be provided for non-academic staff whose duties entail working directly with the Office of the Dean or otherwise directly facilitating the delivery of the College's programs of study (such as Registrars, Distance Delivery Officers, Chaplains, and Student Counsellors). The availability of professional development should be reasonably consistent across the Member Institutions.
- **Benchmarking:** Policy and procedures must be comparable to those in other higher education institutions in light of best practice.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROCEDURES

Professional development takes place in three constituencies: in the College as a whole; in the Member Institutions; and in Member Institutions in collaborative groups.

Professional Development in the College as a Whole

The College as such has been providing two professional development sessions per year, one per semester, on issues in teaching and learning that pertain to all members of the academic faculty. These sessions have as one aim to enable greater awareness of faculty concerns and potentials across the College, and thereby to establish grounds for increased cooperative endeavour. The College will continue to offer at least two professional development sessions each year on relevant matters.

From 2009, it is intended that the College will normally arrange four professional development sessions each year, two in each semester, addressing four focal areas of College life in this sequence:

- March New faculty induction
- May Research and scholarship
- August Teaching and learning
- November Institutional issues in the higher education context.

These sessions will be organized by the Office of the Dean, in consultation with the Professional Development Committee and other appropriate Committees. In this regard:

- Members of the academic faculty are generally expected to be in attendance, as are sessional lecturers teaching that semester.
- All new faculty and new sessionals (or faculty or sessionals who have not worked in a Member Institution for the past five years) are expected to attend the first as well as the remaining sessions.
- Academic staff in other-language programs are encouraged to attend relevant sessions, but the Member Institution(s) concerned may make alternative arrangements that achieve the same results.
- Non-academic staff whose duties entail working directly with the Office of the Dean or otherwise directly facilitating the delivery of the College's programs of study are expected to attend at least the fourth session.
- A certificate of attendance will be provided, and apologies will be noted.
- The seminars will normally be held within the semester, during the day on Mondays, when it is requested that no classes be timetabled.
- The dates will be listed for each year in the College Calendar, available on the website and in the Handbook.
- Sessions will normally be scheduled for a three-hour period.
- The Office of the Dean will collate information on the content, attendance, duration, cost, and other particulars, in order to compile accurate annual reports to the States in which the College is accredited to deliver courses.

In addition, events may be arranged from time to time to provide opportunities to hear from and consult with visiting experts. Moreover, as set out in the Strategic Plan, the Office of the Dean, in consultation with the Professional Development, Research, and Learning and Teaching Committees, will arrange a triennial Conference as a compulsory part of the academic life of the College, bringing together all faculties and the broader community of learners.

Professional Development in the Member Institutions

Each Member Institution will hold professional development activities relating to the four focal areas, with reference to particular interests of their own institution.

Each Member Institution will, in addition, encourage and facilitate the participation of its academic staff, both faculty and sessionals, and non-academic staff whose duties entail working directly with the Office of the Dean or otherwise directly facilitating the delivery of the College's programs of study in relevant external activities such as conferences, workshops, and courses.

Each Member Institution will, accordingly, develop a budget that provides appropriate funding and time allowance to meet these requirements. Each Member Institution will undertake annual appraisals of its staff and establish professional development plans for each person.

Professional Development in Member Institutions in Collaborative Groups

Various Member Institutions may collaborate in holding joint professional development activities relating to any of the four focal areas, with reference to shared interests.

Reporting Professional Development

Principals will send annually to the Office of the Dean, by the end of the second semester,

- an *Institutional Professional Development Activities Report*: a report on the content, attendance, duration, cost, and other particulars of these activities in the Member Institution, whether carried out by the individual Member Institution alone or conducted collaboratively with one or more other Member Institutions;
- the Institution's annual budget for professional development in the forthcoming year.

In addition, the participation of individual academic faculty (full-time or permanent part-time) in professional development activities will be reported annually in the *Research and Professional Development Report*.

The Office of the Dean will collate this information in order to compile accurate annual reports to the States in which the College is accredited to deliver courses.

Professional Development Budgets

The annual College Budget will provide funding for the College professional development sessions and for the professional development of all staff in the Office of the Dean.

Member Institutions will fund professional development for their academic staff in terms of actual funds and time allowance, as relevant.

An appropriate level of overall funding that is reasonably consistent across the Member Institutions, equitable for all staff (including academic staff teaching SCD students in languages other than English, sessionals, and non-academic staff whose duties entail working directly with the Office of the Dean or otherwise directly facilitating the delivery of the College's programs of study) and adequate for high-quality endeavour will be established and reviewed from time to

time by Academic Board and Council, in consultation with the Principals and the Professional Development Committee. This procedure will be operative from 2009 on.

Funding will include such elements as:

- provision of professional development activities or collaboration in holding such activities;
- support of individual staff by funding and/or time release to participate in the College professional development sessions and in other activities such as conferences, workshops, and courses;
- systematic provision of adequate study leave to achieve particular goals in research and scholarship.

To help achieve such requirements Member Institutions are encouraged to liaise and work cooperatively with each other. Member Institutions are also encouraged to record and report meetings or other activities that result in staff becoming better informed concerning any relevant area or better able to implement their knowledge.

Notes

1. Professional Development of Academic Staff in Other-Language Programs

Member Institutions through which programs of study are delivered in other languages, such as the BTh (Korean Medium) will provide equitable professional development for all academic staff concerned and report on this in the annual *Institutional Professional Development Activities Report*.

2. Professional Development of Non-Academic Staff

Those non-academic members of staff in the Member Institutions whose duties entail working directly with the Office of the Dean or otherwise directly facilitating the delivery of the College's programs of study, such as Registrars, Distance Delivery Officers, Chaplains, and Counsellors, will be provided with appropriate professional development to enhance their contribution to the College through their Member Institutions.

The Student Administration Committee, with the Director of Student Administration, will be responsible for the ongoing training of Registrars in the use of the College database (Edupoint).

A summary report on professional development for this constituency should be included in the annual *Institutional Professional Development Activities Report*.

3. Professional Development of Staff in the Office of the Dean

For the professional development of both academic and non-academic staff in the Office of the Dean see *Policy and Procedures for Professional Development of Staff in the Office of the Dean*.

4. Integration

THE STRATEGIC PLAN: Vision, Mission and Values, and Goals

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:

- *Research Active Policy*
- *Register of Supervisors*
- *Research and Professional Development Report*
- *Institutional Professional Development Activities Report*
- *Moderation Procedures. Member Institutions*
- *Teaching and Learning Enhancement Plan*
- *Policy on Evaluation of Teaching and Learning*
- *Student Feedback on Teaching Survey*
- *Student Feedback Unit Survey*
- *Academic Faculty Classification*
- *Promotions Policy*
- *Induction of New Faculty Policy*
- *Policy and Procedures for Professional Development of Staff in the Office of the Dean*

NEW REQUIREMENTS:

- *Institutional Professional Development Activities Report.* This will deal with content, attendance, duration, cost, and other particulars on these, as well as an annual budget for the forthcoming year.
- *Moderation Procedures. Member Institutions*
- *Induction of New Faculty Policy*
- *Policy and Procedures for Professional Development of Staff in the Office of the Dean*

COMMITTEES:

- Professional Development Committee
- Learning and Teaching Committee
- Student Administration Committee
- Academic Standards Committee
- Promotions Committee

MEMBER INSTITUTIONS

- The policies and procedures of the individual Member Institutions

EXTERNAL

- Annual reports to NSW DET, QLD Office of Higher Education, etc.
- Five-yearly Reaccreditation processes

5. Key Documents

- Queensland Office of Higher Education Course Assessment Panel Meeting: FINAL REPORT 2008
- NSW DET: 2007-2008 Submissions and Reports
- Involvement of faculty from Member Institutions outside Sydney in SCD Professional Development Seminars: a response to the Academic Board: 18th Sept 2007

6. Policy Review

This policy will next be reviewed in December 2010