College of Arts and Letters
Guidance on Use of Research and Professional Development Funds

Further to our previous email of April 2, in response to the financial constraints caused by the current COVID-19 crisis, and following guidance from the Executive Vice President and the Provost, the College is issuing further guidance on the responsible use of R&PD funds. The goal is to preserve funds in all accounts. We recognize that teaching and research continue apace, and faculty will need to pay for certain essential goods and services. The following guidelines are intended to help faculty and department chairs determine appropriate uses for R&PD funds. This advice pertains to both regular R&PD accounts and those funded by endowed chairs or collegiate endowed chairs.

Travel

- Travel costs for trips that began before March 11, the date all travel was suspended, may be reimbursed.
- If you purchased tickets for conference travel or another business purpose that has been cancelled, please see the link here for University guidance.
- Currently, no travel is allowed. Any travel expenses incurred after March 11 will not be reimbursed.
- Until further notice, no new conferences, events involving visiting speakers, or other events involving travel should be scheduled, neither over the summer nor in the coming academic year.
- Individual faculty, programs, departments, and other units may have already invited speakers or organized conferences for the summer or the coming year. Travel bookings for future events cannot be reimbursed at this time. We recommend waiting and booking travel for your visitors later, when you are sure that your event can run as scheduled. If you are at the point where you have to decide whether to run your event or not, we recommend postponing it.
- We recommend the same for your own future travel. Book later, not now.

Technology

- The Campus Workstation Program (CWP) is suspended. New faculty will be issued CWP computers at the start of their contract but no other CWP computers will be issued.
- Computers and peripherals may not be purchased with R&PD funds. Any exceptions must be approved by the divisional associate dean. Exceptions to this policy will be rare.
● In keeping with existing policy, R&PD accounts may not be used to cover home office costs, including computers, peripherals, and office supplies (including toner and paper). Campus remains open and floor printers in faculty office buildings are operational.

● Expenses for home internet service or cell phone service will not be reimbursed.

Labor

● Student workers who were working and being paid before spring break may continue to work and continue to be paid through the end of May. No new student workers may be hired.

● Student workers may not be paid after May 31 without authorization from the College. The College will solicit and review applications for such payments, both for the summer and for the Fall semester. Applications that the College approves will be forwarded to the provost’s office for final approval. Priority will be given to student workers involved in instruction (peer tutors, discussion group leaders, etc.). Applications to pay research assistants will also be considered. Financial aid conditions will of course also be a factor in decisions.

● Honoraria: some previously scheduled events (conferences, workshops, lectures, etc.) may be conducted virtually. If you were planning to pay honoraria to external participants, please consult with your divisional associate dean before promising or issuing payments.

● Professional services: the College will authorize R&PD payments to external providers on a very limited basis. Payments for indexing, copyediting, proofreading, cartography, image production, etc. will be authorized for the following:

  o Junior faculty preparing publications essential to their promotion case
  o Faculty of all ranks preparing publications that are under contract

Hiring professional services for all other projects should be postponed.

Other Expenses

● R&PD accounts may be used to pay for other expenses that, in the judgement of the department chairperson, are deemed essential. Faculty should discuss expenses in advance with their department chairperson to avoid problems later. Chairs should consult with their divisional dean in case of doubts. We stress that such expenses should be essential, not just customary. Examples might include books needed for teaching a current class; or research materials, reproductions, or software needed for a current research project or a publication under contract; human subjects payments; materials for creative work.
Exceptions:

External grants may continue to be used to pay for labor, computer equipment, and supplies. External grants may not be used to fund travel at this time.

Internal funding (from ISLA, Office of Research, Keough School institutes, etc.) should be administered according to the instructions given by the funding body. We are awaiting specific guidance from the Office of Research; until then, we suggest that faculty members consult with the funding source before making any payments.