MESSIAH UNIVERSITY
Student Government Association

Professional Development Grant

1) **Objective**
   a) The purpose of the SGA Professional Development Grant is to support students in furthering their professional outlook and success for a post-graduation transition. SGA will help students through partially funding the expenses of conferences so that students can put to practice the information they have learned and have the opportunity to network with other students and professionals. The conference being attended by the student must relate to his/her major and/or future professional goals.
      i) Please note that this grant is not intended for experiences which relate to faith development, discerning career choices, job fairs, and conducting research. Presenting at conferences is an acceptable use of development funds.

2) **Requirements of Applicant**
   a) Minimum of sophomore status and with good academic standing.
   b) The conference must relate to identified major or future career plans.
   c) Submission of a statement of purpose explaining the purpose of the attendance and how the candidate hopes to benefit.
      i) It is also helpful to include how the Messiah University community can benefit from your attendance.
      ii) Note if there are things you hope to bring back and share with classmates and/or professors.
   d) All applications materials should be submitted before attending the scheduled conference
   e) Submission of proof (i.e. conference receipt) that the student was in attendance of the conference and of their presentation if presenting.

3) **Amount of grants**
   a) All grants will be awarded in an amount up to or equal to fifty percent of the anticipated cost of the conference as detailed in the completed cost worksheet, with a maximum grant of $300.
   b) The total dollar amount of grants given in a single school year shall not exceed six thousand dollars.

c) Typical distribution will be in the form of a reimbursement for expenses. After the conference has been attended, the grant recipient will submit receipts to the SGA VP of Finance for reimbursement. Requests for funds prior to attending the conference should be directed to the SGA VP of Finance. Failure to attend the conference or show proof of attendance will result in the return of the granted amount back to SGA.

4) **Procedure for awarding a grant**
   a) The applicant shall complete the application form detailed on the last pages after this manual.
   b) The applicant shall then email the signed application in PDF format to the Vice President of Engagement (sga@messiah.edu), who shall then verify with the Application Committee that the application has been properly filled out, approve the application, and submit it to the Vice President of Finance.
   c) The Application Committee will consist of the Vice President of Engagement, Vice President of Diversity Affairs, the Vice President of Finance, a staff member from the Career and Professional Development Center, and an academic faculty member.
   d) Preference will be given to applicants who:
      i) present at a conference
      ii) are actively involved in the conference such as being a part of the conference committee
      iii) attend a conference clearly connected to professional discipline or future career goal.
   e) The Vice President of Finance shall approve the proposed cost for the conference based on the completed cost worksheet in the application. When the recipient returns from the conference and submits receipts, the VP of Finance shall make a transfer for the amount of the grant, as determined from the parameters outlined in 3 a), from the Development Fund program account to the appropriate department account.
   f) A copy of the transfer form shall be given to the student so that they may present it to the department chair as verification that they have received the grant.
   g) Applications that are received over the summer months will be considered by a committee consisting of the President of SGA, a Career and Professional Development Center staff member, the Director of SILP and the SILP Administrative Assistant

5) **Statement of Purpose Evaluation**

a) A rubric has been created to evaluate candidate applications. The areas that will be rated by the committee include:
   i) Quality of Writing
   ii) Relevancy of experience to career goals
   iii) Responsibility/involvement at conference – (greater funding potential for presenters, conference participants etc.)
   iv) Benefit to Campus Community- (How will the campus community benefit?)

6) **Changes to the programs**
   a) The Academic Affairs Committee, in conjunction with the Finance and Organizations Committee, will be responsible for reviewing the program and recommending any changes to the Student Senate.
   b) Any changes to the guidelines for the program outlined in this document must be approved by a majority vote of the Student Senate.
   c) Changes in the monetary amount per grant or the total amount to be given out during the year must also be reconciled with any language in the SGA Financial Policy which references them.

See next page for application that is to be submitted.

Application for SGA Professional Development Grant

1) Please fill out the following:

Applicant Name: _____Graduating Year: _____

Student ID # _____ Major: _____

Contact Number: _____ Applicant Email: _____

Supporting Mentor: _____

Name of Conference: _____

Location of Conference: _____ Date of Attendance: _____

Conference Website: _____

Presentation Topic (if presenting): _____

Other Purpose (if not presenting): _____

      (examples: part of conference committees, volunteering at a conference, presenting work other than poster such as a paper or artwork)

How did you hear about the SGA Professional Development Grant?
_____

2) Create a one-page Statement of Purpose (in PDF form), which should contain the following:
   a) Relevancy of experience to career goals
   b) Responsibility/involvement at a conference – (greater funding for presenters)
   c) Benefit to Campus Community- (How will the campus community benefit?)
3) **Complete the Estimated Expenses Worksheet**

        Registration Fee: $ _____

Miscellaneous*: $ _____ (Please describe in space below) ***As a note, <u>food for academic conferences cannot be funded</u> by SGA as per Section 10, Article III, Clause iii, Sub-clause 2 of the SGA Governance Manual.**

Total $ _____

Will the reimbursement be made out to you personally or should it be made out to another department on campus?

_____

4) **Obtain signatures from the Supporting Mentor*** (students are also strongly encouraged to speak with department chairs to determine if additional conference funding is available)

Student*:		Date:	
Supporting Mentor*:		Date:	

*Student: By electronically signing this, I agree that this signature is coherent to physically signing. With this signature, I confirm that the information above and from the statement are accurate and true.

*Mentor: By electronically signing this, I agree that this signature is coherent to physically signing. With this signature, I confirm that I have looked over the student's application and approve his/her attendance to the conference.

Save all documents, (a filled-out application in PDF form and statement of purpose in PDF form) email them to the Vice President of Engagement, at sga@messiah.edu. Applications will only be considered complete once all documents are received.