

El Camino College

Professional Development Office

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

About Flex

The questions and answers below are a format for explaining the Flexible Calendar (Flex) Program at El Camino College.

Each 10-month Full-Time Faculty Member shall be responsible for 24 hours of Professional Development and each 12-month Full-Time Faculty member shall be responsible for 9 hours of Professional Development. [Faculty Contract, Article 8, Section 21. Flex Time Credit]

1. What are Flex Days?

As allowed by Title 5, Flex days are days set aside in the calendar for professional development rather than for meeting with classes. *A total of four (4) days shall be identified for Faculty Development (Flex) on the academic calendar. A Flex day shall consist of six (6) hours. [Faculty Contract, Article 8, Section 21(a)].*

2. If we didn't have Flex Days, would we have more days of vacation?

No, we would have additional days of class.

3. What kinds of activities are considered "professional development" activities?

The term "Professional Development" includes activities which increase knowledge in the discipline or which directly enhance teaching skills, but also activities which improve working relationships with students and staff in and out of the classroom as well as activities which enhance an individual's physical and mental ability to perform his or her job.

4. Do all professional activities have to occur on certain days?

No, but for accountability purposes, certain days are labeled "Flex days" on the academic calendar. However, attendance on designated days, for which Flex credit is given, may be required by the district.

5. What is "Flex Credit"?

Flex credit is the state's way of insuring that faculty engage in professional development activities equivalent to the amount of time that they would be spending in class without a Flex program. One hour of time spent on professional development equals one hour of Flex credit.

6. How much Flex credit do I earn if I present or facilitate an activity?

Individual presenters of campus-wide Flex activities earn triple Flex credit. Presenters of division/department workshops, multiple presenters, and brown bag facilitators earn double credit.

7. Are any activities mandatory at ECC?

ECC requires attendance at the activities occurring all day **August 25, 2016** and three hours on **February 8, 2017**. A total of 9 hours of Flex credit are given for these days. The August 26 and February 9 days listed on the School Year Calendar are optional days. *The first day of the fall semester shall be a Flex day, with six (6) hours of scheduled activities mandatory for all Full-Time Faculty Members. The morning of the first day of the spring semester shall be three (3) hours of scheduled Flex activities mandatory for all Full-Time Faculty Members. [Faculty Contract, Article 8, Section 21(b)].*

8. What happens if I am sick or have a personal emergency on a mandatory day?

If a Faculty Member misses a mandatory Flex day, he/she shall be charged under the appropriate leave account in proportion to the missed Flex time and may not make up the absence. Six hours of Flex time shall be equal to one day of absence. Any portion of the 6 hours missed shall be considered a partial absence and shall be charged accordingly. [Faculty Contract, Article 8, Section 21(b)(1)].

9. What are my Flex obligations if I am on Sabbatical leave or pre-retirement?

Faculty members on extended leave (e.g. sabbatical, study abroad, faculty exchange, catastrophic illness, etc.) shall have their twenty-four (24) hour Flex obligation proportionately reduced for that academic year. [Faculty Contract, Article 8, Section 21(c)].

If you are participating in the Pre-Retirement Program, your Flex obligation is reduced proportionately based on the load you are teaching for the year. If you are teaching in the fall, your Flex obligation includes the mandatory fall Flex day. If you are teaching in the spring, your Flex obligation includes the mandatory spring Flex day.

10. What options are available for satisfying the remaining 15 hours of my Flex obligation?

The additional 15 hours of required Flex activities will be required of all 10-month Faculty and may be completed with activities selected at the Faculty Member's discretion.

[Faculty Contract, Article 8, Section 21(b)]. Faculty may satisfy this obligation through a variety of professional activities:

- You can attend workshops or programs offered on campus throughout the academic year.
- You can attend off-campus workshops and conferences. The maximum Flex credit for a single day is 6 hours.
- You can design your own individual or group projects with the approval of your dean.

11. You mean we can design our own activities for Flex credit?

Yes. If you wish to receive credit for an individual project, complete an Individual Project Proposal using Professional Development Reporter and click on Submit for dean approval. Upon completion of an approved project, you must Sign-Off on the project in Professional Development Reporter by clicking the "Electronic Signature" check box, then clicking Submit. The hours are added to your Flex Summary at this point. Make a copy for your records.

12. What kinds of individual or group projects are acceptable for Flex credit?

Any projects that result in faculty, student, or instructional improvement are acceptable.

- Major design or redesign of courses
- Subject area research and course update
- New course/program development
- Development of new materials for use in course/program evaluation
- Exploration of alternate instructional methods

- Review of library and media holdings
- Assessment of community needs and preferences as they relate to instruction at the community college
- Academic projects involving student groups

13. How does the college keep track of faculty Flex credits?

Attendance is taken at the mandatory on-campus activities (Flex days). Sign-in sheets are used to track on-campus programs.

If you are doing an Individual Project Proposal, login to Professional Development Reporter, choose "Manage FLEX Activities," then select "Submit an Individual Project Proposal." Once you click on Submit, the proposal will route to your dean for approval. Upon completion of the project, go into Professional Development Reporter and Sign-Off on the Project by clicking the "Electronic Signature" check box. The hours are added to your Flex Summary at this point. Retain a copy for your files.

All Individual Project Proposals must be entered in Professional Development Reporter and approved by your dean prior to May 15, 2017. You have until June 30, 2017 to sign-off on your completed project.

All other Flex activities (e.g. conferences, off-campus workshops), are reported by logging into Professional Development Reporter, choosing "Manage Your FLEX Activities," then selecting "Submit Conference Attendance/Off-Campus Workshop/ Other." Complete the form and read the statement before checking the "Electronic Signature" check box, then click Submit.

Except for activities taking place after May 15, 2017, conferences, etc. should be entered after attendance. If you are attending an activity between May 16 and June 30, 2017, please enter the activity before May 15.

14. When can I earn Flex credit?

You may earn Flex credit during any non-duty hours (hours you are not scheduled to be in class or in your office) throughout the academic year (July 1-June 30).

15. What about Adjunct Faculty?

ECC has no Flex requirement for adjunct faculty members. However, they are welcome to attend any scheduled activities on Flex days and throughout the year.

16. What about classified staff and management personnel?

Classified and management employees do not have a Flex requirement; however, they are welcome to participate in any of the scheduled activities. Classified staff need to make prior arrangements with their supervisors in order to coordinate office/area coverage.

17. Do participants have to pre-register to attend an activity?

In order to assure space availability and enough handout materials, pre-registration is required for some programs. For activities requiring pre-registration a link is provided with the program announcement, or you can log into Professional Development Reporter to register for current activities/programs and technology training. Attendance reminders will be sent one week prior to the event.

18. What if I don't complete my Flex obligation?

Absences on the mandatory Flex days (9 hours) will be charged to leave and cannot be made up. *If a Faculty Member does not complete any portion of the additional 15 hours of required Flex activities by June 30, his/her pay will be deducted for any of the Flex hours not completed.* *[Faculty Contract, Article 8, Section 21(b)(2)].*