

Proposed resolution to move forward to the Faculty Senate from the Benefits Committee

(approved at the February 1, 2017, Benefits Committee meeting)

Background

The Project Grant Award is one of three Faculty Development Programs available to support faculty at NKU. Funds provided by a Project Grant Award can be used in conjunction with Sabbatical Leaves and/or Summer Fellowships, or they can be used to fund other faculty-led projects that cannot be covered using funds from department budgets. According to section 11.3.3 of the Faculty Handbook, Project Grant funds are to be spent between July 1 and June 30 of the following year. This timing creates two issues. First, there is a mismatch with the timing of the Summer Fellowship Award, which begins earlier: on the first Monday after spring commencement (Faculty Handbook section 11.2.6). Second, the Project Grant timing makes it awkward to involve students in projects. One popular use of the Project Grant Award is to pay students for their participation. In order to engage students as deeply as possible, it is desirable to involve them during the summer months; however, it is difficult for students to commit to a project if funding does not become available until July 1.

In the last couple of years, the Provost has made Project Grant Award funds available at the same time that Summer Fellowships begin, which addresses both of these timing issues. Anecdotal feedback from Project Grant recipients is that this early awarding of funds works well. Still, the discrepancy between the official grant funding timeline laid out in the Faculty Handbook and the actual timeline makes it difficult for faculty members to write clear project descriptions in their applications.

Recommendation

The Faculty Senate Benefits Committee recommends that the recent policy of making Project *Grant* funding available at the beginning of the summer be formalized by making a small change to section 11.3.3 of the Faculty Handbook, as detailed below.

Current wording (text to be removed in italics). Normally the maximum amount for a faculty project grant will be the amount of a faculty summer fellowship. Especially worthy projects, however, may be funded with additional amounts. *The period for expending grant funds is limited to July 1 of the calendar year in which the award is made through June 30 of the following calendar year.*

Proposed new wording (new text in boldface). Normally the maximum amount for a faculty project grant will be the amount of a faculty summer fellowship. Especially worthy projects, however, may be funded with additional amounts. **Grant funds will be made available on May 1 of the calendar year in which the award is made and must be spent before June 30 of the following calendar year.**