

Submitted: May 14, 2014

President Tiefenthaler,

Please find below the report for the Block 8 Project Charge: Guidelines for Staff Taking Half Block and/or Summer Courses Block Project.

## **Charge**

Fulfilling our mission to provide the finest liberal arts education in the country requires a campus culture that supports a first-rate staff in connecting to our mission and developing enthusiasm for life-long learning, flexibility, open-mindedness, and other 21st century skills our students are acquiring. More importantly, because lifelong learning is critical for individuals to reach their potential in today's dynamic and rapidly changing world, utilizing our Half Block and linked thematic summer courses, Colorado College should provide access to educational opportunities that further intellectual inquiry and familiarize our staff with our unique curriculum structure.

Ensuring these opportunities are open to all, while also maintaining effective, high quality operations of the college, President Tiefenthaler is commissioning a block project to recommend guidelines for staff that wish to take Half Block or summer courses (existing summer blocks or special summer courses to be developed specifically for staff). In developing recommended guidelines, the block project team should consider the following:

- Students have first priority to course selections.
- Impact on different divisions. NOTE: The Committee interpreted this to mean the departments in which staff choosing to access this benefit worked.
- How often a staff member can access this professional development opportunity.
- Process for application/approval.
- Guidelines for choosing among applicants when space is limited.
- Courses with fees.
- Courses where staff presence will affect desired outcomes.
- Participation and opportunities away from campus.

## **Overview**

The committee first met April 22<sup>nd</sup> to discuss the charge and to identify the information needed to inform the development of guidelines for staff participation in Half Block/Summer Session/Adjunct Courses, second responsible adult, and other professional development opportunities. The committee looked at the current Tuition Remission process, the existing processes for course registration, and the previous participation of staff members and faculty in Half Block and Summer Session. Additionally, Lisa Brommer shared that Human Resources is conducting a needs assessment of the professional development opportunities in which staff members are interested in participating.

The committee also discussed how staff participation in a course might impact outcomes. The committee agreed that the presence of staff is not likely to have a significant impact on the desired outcomes of a class, if any at all. However, several of the Half Block offerings are geared toward student professional and skill development. The presence of staff members in half block offerings such as these might have an impact on the intended outcomes of these offerings. To make it easy on staff members, these offerings could be indicated as "open only to students" in the listing.

Considerable discussion ensued around the impact a staff member's participation might have on a variety of departments as well as staff members' abilities to take advantage of this personal development opportunity based on their work loads and travel schedules. The committee acknowledges there is currently no way to level the playing field for all staff members. Here are some examples: smaller departments may have a more difficult time supporting multiple staff members' participation in the same year; it may be easier for academic departments to support staff participation in an adjunct and student life departments to support participation in a summer or half-block session. The committee also recognizes that several student life departments teach non-credit bearing half-block offerings and therefore will not be able to take advantage of this benefit during half-block. By offering both half-block and summer offerings, the committee believes these staff members will have access to this benefit at least once during the year.

It will be important that the college encourage supervisors to be as flexible as possible in supporting staff members' use of this benefit. It will also be important that supervisors are supported to say "no" when a staff member's participation will significantly impact the quality of operations of an office/department. The opportunity to participate in a course is one of the leave benefits offered by the College to staff, but like other benefits, it must be approved by supervisors.

Over the past three academic years (Fall 2011- Spring 2014), two (2) faculty members, one (1) exempt staff member, and one (1) non-exempt staff member have participated in either a Half Block or Summer Session course. For this reason, while the committee projects an increase in participation, we do not anticipate an unmanageable increase.

### **Consultations**

Ryan Hammes was consulted regarding the use of SUMMIT for non-credit bearing half-block offerings. Ryan shared that staff members could access SUMMIT to enroll in half-block offerings using their CC email address. There is currently no system setting that will allow student registration to have priority. The prioritization of student registration would be a manual process. It would be possible for SUMMIT to be used to support staff registration in non-credit bearing half-block offerings.

Phil Apodaca joined the committee meeting May 8<sup>th</sup> regarding the use of Banner for staff registration in Half Block, Summer Session, and Adjunct courses. Staff members could be registered using the Banner system. ITS: would be asked to make some changes in the system in order to allow faculty members to see which individuals registered were staff members. In the interim, staff members could be flagged as "special status student." If a course is not close to capacity, the staff member would be enrolled to audit the course. If the course is at or close to capacity, the staff member would be notified on the third day of the class (following the last drop/add day) if he or she could enroll.

Inger Bull was consulted on the second responsible adult (SRA) away process. The importance of language skills and previous international travel experience for an individual serving as an SRA was stressed. Likewise, Inger shared that many faculty members like to choose their own SRA to ensure personality compatibility and ability to contribute to the overall student experience. Inger suggested that having available staff members with the right skill set available would be helpful for new faculty members or those teaching a course away for the first time. Inger collaborated on the development of a proposal for staff participation in a second responsible adult process, which was reviewed by Emily Chan.

### **Philosophy**

The following recommendations are based on a philosophy of "personal development," furthering intellectual inquiry, and familiarizing staff members with the unique Colorado College curricular structure. The committee recommends this benefit not be tied to "professional development," where the course or offering should enhance staff member's performance on the job. A staff member's participation would support a spirit of life-long learning, mental agility, increased interaction between faculty and staff, and better understanding of CC's academic core.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the collected information and discussion the committee makes the following recommendations.

- **Summer Session/Half Block/Adjunct Courses/Offerings**

We recommend that benefit-eligible staff (staff who work 1000+ hours/annually), be able to audit one (1) course per calendar year (not to exceed one (1) unit) during regular hours at their regular rate of pay with supervisor approval for personal development. Tuition will be waived but the staff member will be responsible for all books or program fees associated with the course.

1. A staff member interested in taking advantage of this benefit will complete a request form and obtain a signature verifying benefits eligibility from Human Resources.
2. He or she will then engage in a conversation with his/her supervisor about interest, indicate the impact on the office, and how the staff member's job duties will be completed while attending the course. Upon agreement between the staff member and supervisor the staff member will obtain a signature from his or her supervisor and the Chair/Cabinet Member.
3. In lieu of registering electronically through SUMMIT or Banner, a staff member will communicate with the faculty member/instructor of the course about his/her interest in auditing the course/offering and obtain a signature from the instructor/faculty member indicating approval of the staff member's participation in the course/offering.

4. The staff member will return the completed form with all the necessary signatures to Human Resources, where records for this benefit will be kept.

A draft of this request form is attached.

- **Summer Professional Development Boot Camps or Special Courses designed for staff**  
Professional development was defined by the committee as an offering, course, program, etc. that will enhance a staff member's performance on the job. The Office of Human Resources is in the process of gathering data for professional development needs and format. The recommendation of the committee is that the creation of professional development boot camps or special courses be coordinated by Human Resources based on the resulting responses of staff identified professional development needs. We recommend these opportunities be available for staff members to enroll using the current Human Resources SUMMIT system.
- **Second Responsible Adult Away**  
After consultation with Inger Bull and Emily Chan, it became clear that most staff would generally not be able to take advantage of this opportunity. For many of these programs there is a need for conversational language skills and experience traveling, if not living, abroad. Attached you will find a proposed process and application that would allow staff members to apply to be a second responsible adult for either international or domestic trips. Staff member's travel expenses and per diem would be covered but no additional stipend would be offered.

If the intention is to provide all staff members with the opportunity to participate in an international experience as a professional development opportunity, attached you will find a proposal for staff members to participate as a Third Responsible Adult, where no language skills, international experience, or logistical coordination experience would be required to participate.

### **Conclusion**

The committee sees this process as a pilot program and if implemented recommends the initial implementation begin for Half Block 2015 and the process be reviewed annually in order to identify problems and potential improvements. Also included is the start of a communications and training outline prior to implementation. The committee submits these recommendations for your consideration. Should you have questions, we would be happy to address them.

Submitted by Committee Members:

Michelle Beckmann, Direct Marketing Manager, Advancement  
Lisa Brommer, Associate Director, Human Resources  
Tracy Coleman, Associate Professor/Chair, Religion Department  
Nancy Heinecke, Office Coordinator, Economics and Business Department  
Megan Nicklaus, Director, Career Center  
McKinley Sielaff, Government Documents Librarian, Tutt Library  
Brenda Soto, Assistant Director, Operations and Conferences, Residence Life  
Ali Springer, Assistant Director, Admission



## **Half Block/Summer Session/Adjunct Courses Communications Plan Draft**

A proper communications plan is necessary to help create a culture that supports first-rate staff in connecting to our mission and developing enthusiasm for life-long learning, flexibility, open-mindedness, and other 21st century skills our students are acquiring.

### **Program Introduction:**

1. Communication to the staff starts with an In The Loop meeting where President Tiefenthaler introduces the program.
2. A brochure would be developed for staff to include a note from President Tiefenthaler, the policy, and either upcoming available course offerings or sample course offerings.
3. The HR website would be populated with all necessary materials: policy, form, and links to all three course categories: Half Block, Summer Session, Adjunct courses.
4. Consult Stephanie Wurtz for other initial communiqué.

### **Back End Communication:**

1. FAQs would be developed for supervisors.
2. FAQs would be developed for department assistants and/or faculty how to handle staff enrollment and wait listing, if applicable.

### **Ongoing Communication:**

1. A benefit eligibility letter/e-mail and brochure would be sent to all eligible staff upon their 1-year anniversary, much like retirement plan benefit eligibility is communicated.
2. A note in the Digest would be sent when course lists are published for upcoming sessions. The Digest would link back to the HR web page with this information so information is in one easy place for the employee.
3. President Tiefenthaler would announcement at In The Loop when session enrollment is open for the various sessions.

### **Feedback/Follow-up:**

1. All employees who participate in a course would be asked to complete a short survey for their feedback about the class and process.
2. A *Questions/Comments* feature would be added to the HR webpage on this benefit so employees may provide feedback.
3. This information would be used to adjust the benefit as needed when the committee reconvenes after the pilot period.

**Second Responsible Adult Considerations**  
**Proposed: May 14, 2014**

**Considerations**

- Not all staff members may have the qualifications to successfully support a faculty member during a summer session abroad. (For example, previous international travel, language skills, logistical coordination, etc.)
- Many faculty members like to hand pick their SRA and ensure personality fit.

**Summer Session Abroad- Staff Development Alternative Proposal**

If the intention is to provide the opportunity for staff members to participate in an international summer session in order to enrich their global and cultural awareness, perhaps an alternative program would be a better solution to increasing the accessibility for all staff members.

Rather than having a staff member apply to be a SAR, a staff member could serve once during their tenure at Colorado College after 2 years of service to participate as a 3<sup>rd</sup> responsible adult. They may be called on to assist in an emergency and can assist with day to day responsibilities but would not be required to have previous international travel or conversational language skills.

Because they would be the third adult, we would recommend the cost of participation not be added onto the student program fee but rather come from an alternative source and ideally through an endowment.

To provide 10 staff members/year an opportunity to participate (approx. \$6000/staff member), a \$12 million endowment would need to be secured. This proposal is scalable, 5 staff members/year would be a \$30,000/year investment or \$6 million endowment. A rough estimate is below:

Airfare	Food	Lodging	Total
\$1500	\$1300	\$3120	\$5920

Acknowledging we are about to begin a capital campaign, we did not move further in identifying what an application process might look like for this proposal, but a committee could do so at a later date.

**Proposed: Process for Staff Application for Second Responsible Adult (SRA)**

**May 14, 2014**

**Summer Session Abroad or In Country**

May- August	Staff member speaks to supervisor about interest and if supported by supervisor completes application. Sample/draft application attached.
August (end)	Application would be submitted to the Office of International Programs for qualification review through the Office of International Programs SUMMIT system no later than the end of August.
September 30 <sup>th</sup>	Faculty members turn in their summer session proposals.
October (beginning)	Office of International Programs will review and match staff applications with open faculty SRA needs.
October (mid)	Summer Session Committee approves or declines Staff SRA applications and selects alternates.
November (beginning)	Staff member notified whether selected as an SRA for summer session.
November (mid)	Staff member accepts or declines.
Accepts	Works with Office of International Programs on requirements for example: Orientation, Health Insurance, Visas, etc. Plans for absence in consultation with supervisor and others in the department.
Declines	Alternate is notified. One week to accept/ decline

**OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS**

**SECOND RESPONSIBLE ADULT (SRA) APPLICATION**

**DRAFT**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Department: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Director/Manager: \_\_\_\_\_

Have you received approval from your Director/Manager?    YES            NO

Please indicate which of the following summer sessions you are interested in supporting (NOTE: if applying for an international destination, you must at a minimum have conversational language skills in the native language and prior international travel experience) :

Melbourne                                      Alaska                                      Chicago      
London                                          Madrid   

Do you have experience leading a student group? Please explain.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please explain why you are interested in accompanying this course in the SRA position?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Please complete if you are applying for an opportunity outside of the USA**

Do you have a current passport?    YES            NO



Have you ever traveled abroad? If yes, where? Discuss your abroad experience.

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Please discuss any language skills you possess and your level of fluency.

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How would you anticipate you might use the information and knowledge you obtain on this program to promote internationalization efforts on campus?

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