Explanation of Flex

# What is Flex?

In accordance with the LRCFT contract, 4 days of the 164-day work year for regular classroom (instructional) faculty, “[a]re compensated Flex days included in the academic calendar. These days are intended for professional development activities and are typically scheduled at the beginning of the fall and spring semesters. Attendance on convocation day is mandatory unless an absence, including professional development, has been pre-approved. Other opportunities for fulfilling the Flex obligation include attending workshops coordinated by the Flex committees at each college and/or participating in an individual professional development activity” [LRCFT Contract: 2014-2017, 4.6.1.]

**All full-time, and some part-time, instructional faculty members owe Flex/Professional**

**Development hours each semester. This is referred to as their ‘Flex obligation’**. Although the first day of classes occurs after Flex Thursday and Convocation Friday each semester, the August and January paychecks for all full-time instructional faculty members, and adjunct instructional faculty scheduled to teach on Thursdays and/or Fridays, will include pay for these two “pre-semester” days of the fall and spring semesters. By participating in Flex/PD events both prior to, and during, each semester, faculty members ‘earn’ pay for these four days and fulfill their ‘work’ obligation, which is referred to as their ‘Flex obligation’.

***Note****: Flex/Professional Development activities must be above and beyond normal faculty duties and responsibilities as outlined in board policy and collective bargaining agreements.*

Planning to attend upcoming Flex activities? Be sure to report your flex-related participation to your online Flex Tracking System account; otherwise, you will not receive Flex credit for your participation. Access to the Flex Online Tracking System is via the Intranet, on the ARC Insider Page.

**Remember**: Your attendance is not automatically reported to the Flex system; adding your name to the attendance sheet only puts your name on paper (it’s physical proof to verify your presence, if needed). You retain the responsibility for documenting your participation into your online Flex account to receive proper Flex credit.

# Full-time faculty Flex responsibilities

A full-time instructional faculty member with no overload has a total obligation of 24 Flex/PD hours per year. Of these hours, 12 hours (for example, six hours on both Friday August 24, 2018, and Friday, January 18, 2019) are mandatory, on-campus workdays.

A full-time instructional faculty member having a full-semester, on-ground (and/or hybrid) overload course normally taught on Thursday and/or Friday has additional Flex/PD hours equal to the number of hours taught on those days. Full-time instructional faculty teaching first and second eight-week overload courses and first, second, or third five-week overload courses will not owe extra Flex/PD hours for those courses.

Full-time instructional faculty are encouraged to submit their Flex/PD activities via the online Flex Tracking System each semester. The deadline to submit Flex/PD hours is May 1 of each academic year. Activities completed after the last day of the spring semester may count toward the following year’s Flex/PD obligation.

* Full-time faculty without overload have twelve hours of flex obligation per semester (six mandatory hours on the convocation Friday per semester and six hours of regular flex per semester).

* Full-time faculty with in-person and/or online synchronous overload classes which meet on Thursdays and/or Fridays owe additional flex hours equal to the number of hours those overload classes meet on Thursdays and/or Fridays.

* Full-time faculty with online asynchronous overload classes do not have an additional flex obligation.

# Adjunct faculty Flex responsibilities

An adjunct instructional faculty member will owe Flex/PD hours equal to the amount of time they teach full-semester, on-ground (and/or hybrid) courses on Thursdays, and/or Fridays each semester. Their Flex obligation for each semester must be fulfilled and reported within that semester by the December 1 and May 1 deadline; participation hours may not carry over to another semester.

This Flex obligation results from the district’s prepaying adjunct instructional faculty members for professional development hours on Thursday and Friday of Flex days equal to the number of hours which they are scheduled to teach full-semester courses on those two days during the upcoming semester.

If Flex/PD hours are not fulfilled and also reported to the [Flex Online](https://inside.losrios.edu/~intranet/cgi-bin/intra/login.cgi?college=ARC) Tracking System by the December 1 and May 1 deadlines, the last paycheck of the semester will experience ‘loss of pay’ for any hours owed to the district at that time.

Adjunct instructional faculty members who only teach on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and/or Saturday will not owe Flex time for that semester. In addition, adjunct instructional faculty members who teach only 5-week classes and/or 8-week classes will not owe Flex time for that semester.

* Part-time (adjunct) faculty teaching in-person and/or online synchronous classes on Thursdays and/or Fridays have a flex obligation, and it is equal to the number of hours that they teach on Thursdays and/or Fridays.

* Part-time (adjunct) faculty teaching online asynchronous classes do not have a flex obligation.

*Note: adjunct instructional faculty member schedules can vary from semester to semester, so please check your TCS (contract), or contact your dean to confirm the amount of Flex/PD time owed each semester.*

# Explanation of Flex Obligation

## How can I earn Flex/PD hours ?

Instructional faculty earn Flex/PD credit by attending any professional development event/activity sponsored by the Center for Teaching and Learning, or the Instructional Technology Center. In addition, individuals may plan to attend other events/activities (on campus, or off) as long as they meet Flex/PD criteria (please see information regarding State PD Guidelines, ARC Strategic Goals, and ARC ISLOs that are located later in this document).

**Remember:** credit for participating in professional development events/activities can be earned only when the events/activities occur **outside** of the faculty members’ usual workday. Otherwise, the time for which the faculty member received their Flex/PD obligation prepayment in August and January paychecks will not have been earned. For example, to attend a professional development event during an office hour or as a field trip with a class would not qualify as Flex time because the faculty member is already being paid for that office hour or class time. This practice, referred to as ‘double dipping’, is not allowed. What is allowed? Attending events/activities that occur outside an instructional faculty members’ scheduled workday, such as: attending a College Hour during lunch break or attending a training after the work day has finished.

## What is considered appropriate, approvable Flex/PD?

As mentioned, professional development activities must be above and beyond normal faculty duties and responsibilities, as outlined in board policy and collective bargaining agreements.

**Flex/PD obligation hours may be fulfilled through participating in:**

· Activities scheduled on Flex days before each semester

· Activities scheduled during the semester and sponsored by the CTL or ITC

· Attending off-campus events (e.g., conferences, workshops).

## When can I attend Flex/PD events?

Flex/PD obligation hours may be fulfilled through participating in:

· Activities scheduled on Flex days before each semester

· Activities scheduled during the semester and sponsored by the CTL or ITC

· Attending off-campus events (e.g., conferences, workshops).

These hours must be submitted via the online Flex Tracking System, accessed through the ARC Intranet (via the ARC Insider page).

Instructional faculty may attend Flex/PD events prior to the beginning of the semester, and/or they may choose to make up the Flex obligation hours at another time during the semester.

***Please note:******Convocation Friday each semester is a mandatory work day for all full-time instructional faculty*. Full-time instructional faculty who are unable to attend Convocation Day events, due to illness or other emergency, must note the absence on that month’s “Cumulative Absence Report” form, or online through Employee Self-Service, and also enter the absence into their online Flex account; as a convenience, two absence choices are pre-loaded into ARC’s online Flex Tracking System for both the fall and spring semesters.**

Occasionally, a faculty member may miss class to attend a daylong or multi-day conference. Flex/PD credit for a portion of the total event length may still be requested using the following example: if a faculty member is scheduled to teach three hours and hold one office hour but instead attends an eight-hour workshop, they could request approval for four hours of Flex/PD credit-- the amount of time that extends past their scheduled workday.

Faculty are encouraged to submit their Flex/PD participation into their online Flex accounts on a regular basis. They are also encouraged to ensure that the correct number of regular Flex hours have been recorded, and to review how close they are to meeting their obligation. If there are questions, please email Christina Wagner in the Center for Teaching and Learning, at wagnerc@arc.losrios.edu

## Is Flex/PD time required if I am on reassigned time or leave?

Yes, Flex/PD time is still required even for faculty on type B or president’s reassigned time. Exceptions would be faculty members on full 100% release time, or Type A, C, or E leaves. These faculty may report their release time as a Flex activity (these types of release time, in addition to family/maternity leave, are pre-loaded options in the system for convenience).

Faculty assigned type B leaves or President’s reassigned time must still enter their information into the database to assure that their reassigned time is shown as the way the Flex obligation was met. Only when the reassigned time information is entered into the online Flex account can the Flex hours be subtracted. Failure to report the reassigned time will result in loss of pay for the Flex hours owed.

## Does travel time count?

Generally, travel time may not be counted as Flex/PD time. However, if activities require travel on a pre-semester Flex/PD day (such that an individual cannot attend other Flex days activities during the travel time), exceptions may be made. For example, a mandatory district-wide convocation requiring faculty to travel from one site to another (e.g., traveling from a required morning district-wide convocation at a hotel back to afternoon Flex sessions on campus), may allow 30-minutes of mid-day travel time.

Another example of PD-related travel time might be a pre-semester field trip where faculty traveling together by bus spend time learning about the site they will be visiting or discussing what was learned after their visit.

If an optional pre-semester Flex day or semester activity is local, faculty may not receive credit for travel time to and from the activity (the situation is similar to not being paid to travel to and from work).

Faculty attending an out-of-town conference, workshop or field trip on a regular work day where the college or district is paying for their travel and/or work time may only request Flex/PD credit for non-travel Flex/PD time beyond their normal working hours.

If combined travel and site time on a pre-semester Flex day is six or more hours in a single day, faculty may request the full six hours Flex credit.

# Examples of approved/not approved Flex/PD events

Frequently, faculty ask about the types of activities that can be approved for Flex/PD credit. The examples below are provided to offer guidance. Flex/PD credit can be approved for many events, and it is hoped faculty will take the opportunity to report these events as a custom event in their online Flex accounts. When reporting any activity as a custom event to the Flex Online Tracking System, faculty must identify which state PD guideline, ARC college objective, and ISLO were met by the event, and also stipulate that their participation in the event occurred above and beyond their regular work day schedule.

## Examples of events which are approved for Flex/PD credit

* All activities listed in the online Professional Development document
* Mentoring
* Tech training
* Area/Department meetings during Flex days
* Outreach to high schools
* Student orientations for teaching faculty
* Facilitating an event (presenters get double Flex credit total for facilitating an event)
* Hiring committees during non-work schedule (i.e.; during summer/winter break)
* Viewing College Hour DVD’s (available for check-out through the CTL and NATO)
* Moving and setting up labs

**Note**: there are several ‘activities’ listed in the Flex system that account for a faculty not attending Flex Days activities and/or Convocation Day events and activities, such as:

* Full day/half day absence on Convocation Day
* Type A, C, E leaves
* Maternity/Family leaves
* Counselor submitting “I worked on a Flex/ Convocation day”
* Faculty submitting “I’m serving as an interim manager/administrator this semester”
* Faculty submitting “I didn’t work here yet” (their contract began after Convocation)

*If you are an instructional faculty member who did not attend Convocation or fulfill your Flex hours due to attending a leave or other work duty, you will still need to ‘attend’ these absences within the online Flex Tracking System in order for the Flex system to account for those hours.*

## Examples of events that are not approved for Flex/PD credit:

* Department meetings during the semester for full-time faculty
* EMP Training
* Committee service or training
* Club advising
* Moving/setting up offices
* Any activity that happens instead of scheduled teaching or office hour time
* Any activity that does not meet a state PD guideline, an ARC strategic goal, and also an ARC Competency.

# Flex Deadline Information

## What are the deadlines for submitting my professional development activities to my online record in the Flex Online Tracking System?

**Adjunct instructional Faculty**: *The deadline for submitting Flex/PD information to the online Flex database is December 1 (if teaching full-semester courses in the fall semester) and May 1 (if teaching full-semester courses in the spring semester)*. It is important for adjunct instructional faculty to remember that extra professional development hours in the fall do not roll over to the spring semester. Flex obligation must be fulfilled on a semester-by-semester basis.

**Full-time instructional Faculty:** *The deadline for submitting Flex/PD information to the online Flex system is May 1.*

## Am I required to complete my Flex/PD attendance online?

Yes. As of Fall 2005, all ARC instructional faculty members who owe Flex/PD hours must report their professional development activities via the online Flex Tracking System, accessed through the ARC Intranet. Step-by-step instructions to help guide faculty through the reporting process can be found on the CTL homepage.

## What happens if I don’t meet my Flex/PD obligation?

In addition to attending Flex/PD events, part of each instructional faculty member’s Flex/PD obligation is the accurate and timely reporting of Flex/PD hours. If Flex/PD obligations are not met (or if events intended to meet the obligation are not reported into the Flex database) instructional faculty members will receive notification by email that their pay will be affected. In other words, if an instructional faculty member has not completed a sufficient number of hours of Flex/PD events, or if an instructional faculty member has attended but not reported their hours to the Flex Online Tracking System by the required deadline, they have not ‘earned’ the hours that were pre-paid at the beginning of that semester. The result will be a ‘Loss of Pay’ on a future paycheck.