

February 19, 2026

26-055

APPROVAL OF PROFESSIONAL LEAVES FOR FY 26-27
FULL-TIME FACULTY AND ACADEMIC PROFESSIONALS

PREPARED BY: Jennifer Ernst, Ed.D., Vice President, Academic Affairs, Office of Academic Affairs

FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY: Jennifer Ernst, Ed.D., Vice President, Academic Affairs, Office of Academic Affairs

APPROVED BY: Dr. Adrien L. Bennings, President

STRATEGIC THEME: Operational Excellence: Efficiency, Effectiveness, and Fiscal Sustainability; Shared Values: People, Connectedness, and Empowerment; Technological Transformation: Agility, Innovation, and Readiness; Holistic Student Support: Integrated, Affordable, and Accessible; Academic Excellence: Student Success, Delivery, and Programming; Community Engagement: Workforce, Education, and Industry Alignment

REPORT: Applications for professional leave were received and processed in accordance with Article 20 of the Agreement between Portland Community College and the Portland Community College Faculty Federation. The President has reviewed the applications and recommendations of the district-wide administration.

RECOMMENDATION: That the following Portland Community College faculty and/or academic professionals be granted professional leaves for the purpose, time period, and salary payments indicated:

Michele Marden

Full-time Faculty: Math

Three Terms: Fall 2026; Winter 2027; Spring 2027

Salary: 65% of Annual Scheduled Salary

Purpose of Leave:

This Professional Leave proposal will include learning coding and the creation of collaborative, group-worthy math problems with corresponding Open Education Resources (OER) homework sets. It may also include content on trauma-responsive teaching, community building, and equitable grading to support student success.

Relates to PCC's Strategic Plan themes:

This proposal supports the Strategic Plan themes of Operational Excellence (improves operational practice and revenue by retaining students who would have otherwise given up because of math); Shared Values (creates belonging by creating community within the classroom); Holistic Student Support (creates a supportive environment where every student thrives), and Academic Excellence (student-centered approach, quality instruction grounded in inclusive teaching practices).

Megan Savage**Full-time Faculty: Composition & Literature****One Term: Spring 2027****Salary: 100% of Annual Scheduled Salary****Purpose of Leave:**

This Professional Leave proposal will implement Artificial Intelligence (AI)-literacy focused assignments in a shareable WR 227 Technical Writing shell and revise the AI module in the Reading, Writing, and English Refresher training. Outcomes will be mapped to course objectives, piloted, and shared with Subject Area Committees (SACs) and training teams to support timely, relevant curriculum improvements.

Relates to PCC's Strategic Plan themes:

This proposal supports the Strategic Plan themes of Shared Values (takes a human-centered approach, rather than a technology or profit-centered approach, foregrounding student and faculty holistically, while exploring AI with open curiosity); Technological Transformation (requires a forward-thinking mindset and instructional readiness/agility, while simultaneously considering sustainability); Holistic Student Support (considers accessibility as well as access and the "digital divide" as part of its consideration of the role of AI in Composition/Technical Writing classrooms); Academic Excellence (is grounded in up-to-date scholarship from a variety of perspectives, largely grounded, but not limited to, Composition & Rhetoric pedagogy in order to support academic excellence and career preparation, as well as inclusive teaching practices); and Community Engagement (involves research into the role of AI in the workforce in a variety of disciplines, and supports students' further/continued research into their own disciplines, preparing them to encounter and adapt to current workforce AI communication demands).

Aaron Payette**Full-time Faculty: Anatomy & Physiology****Two Terms: Fall 2026; Winter 2027****Salary: 75% of Annual Scheduled Salary****Purpose of Leave:**

This Professional Leave proposal involves developing an accessible image library of human cells, tissues, and organs for Biology 231 Human Anatomy & Physiology I, BI 232 Human Anatomy & Physiology II, and BI 233 Human Anatomy & Physiology III.

With around 500 images, the library will be PCC-owned and enhance teaching, including support for emergency labs.

Relates to PCC's Strategic Plan themes:

This proposal supports the Strategic Plan themes of Academic Excellence (improving the faculty member's ability and knowledge to teach subject matter, improvement in the resources used for courses, and ensuring the resources created are accessible to all students); Technological Transformation (learning proficiency in the use of a new technology i.e. Keyence microscope with computer interface); and Community Engagement (gaining the public's trust by effective and ethical use of public and private resources by using existing underutilized expensive lab equipment)

Amanda Davis

Full-time Faculty: Interior Design

One Term: Fall 2026

Salary: 100% of Annual Scheduled Salary

Purpose of Leave:

This Professional Leave proposal supports the creation and development of five fully accessible modules for the interior design curriculum for Open Education Resources (OER), available in 2027 after review. This proposal continues the work the faculty member started as a recipient of a 2025-2027 Open Education Resource grant.

Relates to PCC's Strategic Plan themes:

This proposal supports the Strategic Plan themes of Holistic Student Support and Academic Excellence through direct support of Strategic Goal 1 *New Student Onboarding* (additional modules would be available to students at the high school level to increase interest in interior design; once enrolled, these modules would align with the college's First Year Experience, a crucial effort for ongoing student engagement) and Strategic Goal 3 *Implement Guided Pathways* (foundational modules in Interior Design would assist to fully implement Guided Pathways).

Daniel Davis

Full-time Faculty: ESOL

One Term: Winter 2027

Salary: 100% of Annual Scheduled Salary

Purpose of Leave:

This Professional Leave proposal will research Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools, address plagiarism, and produce a paper, workshop, and possible pilot to guide departmental AI use. It also aims to develop guidelines for responsible student engagement with AI within the ESOL program.

Relates to PCC's Strategic Plan themes:

This project supports the Strategic Plan themes of Holistic Student Support (creating a sense of belonging among ESOL students, incorporating culturally-relevant materials

and teaching methods supported by AI and Large Language Model [LLM] analytics); Academic Excellence (redefining the systems of educational delivery through the innovative use of technology, creating a more learner-centric ecosystem); and Community Engagement (preparing ESOL students for workforce integration by equipping them with language skills honed by familiarity with modern technological tools relevant in today's job market; developing partnerships with tech companies specializing in educational AI and LLMs can enhance PCC's role as a leader in advancing equitable student success).

Alejandra Bonifacino

Full-time Faculty: Spanish Language and Culture

One Term: Winter 2027

Salary: 100% of Annual Scheduled Salary

Purpose of Leave:

This Professional Leave proposal includes relevant activities in Artificial Intelligence (AI)-enhanced teaching and sociolinguistic fieldwork that strengthen digital literacy and culturally responsive learning. It also outlines meaningful college contributions through faculty workshops, integration of findings into language programs, and a clear equity-focused teaching plan.

Relates to PCC's Strategic Plan themes:

This proposal supports the Strategic Plan themes of Holistic Student Support and Operational and Academic Excellence through direct support of Strategic Goal 1 *New Student Onboarding* (creating inclusive, culturally responsive Spanish instruction that aligns with multilingual, identity-affirming, and accessible learning experiences); Strategic Goal 2 *Fully Implement Strategic Course Scheduling* (developing AI-enhanced curriculum improving course delivery efficiency); Strategic Goal 3 *Fully Implement Guided Pathways* (integrating sociolinguistic research will strengthen Spanish pathway progression and student engagement); and Strategic Goal 4 *Increase Student Scholarships and Funds for Wrap-Around Supports* (fostering equitable, learner-centered pedagogy that enhances access to academic support and promotes student success).

Jamie Heberlein

Full-time Faculty: Early Education & Family Studies

One Term: Fall 2026

Salary: 100% of Annual Scheduled Salary

Purpose of Leave:

This Professional Leave proposal will develop an Early Childhood Leadership course, monthly group coaching, and leadership training for staff, faculty, and students supporting career growth and higher wages for Early Childhood Education (ECE) students (upon faculty member's completion of an Executive Leadership Coach training course).

Relates to PCC's Strategic Plan themes:

This proposal supports the Strategic Plan themes of Holistic Student Support (enhances support via coaching models that remove barriers to success); Academic Excellence (advances the plan's emphasis on Delivery by cultivating a culture of student-focused teaching excellence rooted in culturally responsive, anti-racist pedagogies); and Community Engagement (sustaining programs that lead to living-wage jobs and equitable opportunities through education).