

USAC Staff Life Committee
Professional Development and Staff Engagement
Statement of Support and Recommendations
October 30, 2020

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Executive Summary

Overview

This document provides a review of factors surrounding retention and an in-depth look at professional development (PD). We compare previous approaches taken by Vanderbilt and its peers to avail staff of PD resources, and we offer guidance for the new PD initiatives in development by the Human Resources Department of People & Engagement. Through an alignment of prioritizations and monthly committee meetings between the USAC Staff Life Committee and HR People & Engagement, we aim to support new initiatives that foster a more robust and holistic approach to staff development and engagement within the community at Vanderbilt University.

Problem

Retention is an on-going concern for most employers as turnover is a costly expense. A recent workforce analysis identified the #1 factor for employees leaving their position was due to lack of growth and career development. To reiterate this finding, University Staff Advisory Council (USAC) consistently fields questions and comments from staff members who inquire about professional development opportunities. To better understand the landscape we sought to collect data from our 92 voting members through a survey (n = 63 respondents).

48% of respondents rated their satisfaction with Vanderbilt's current PD offerings as **highly unsatisfied or unsatisfied**.

33% of respondents felt **moderately satisfied**.

With the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic, sudden and systemic changes were required in the work environment and in workforce management at Vanderbilt. These necessary adjustments have highlighted how valuable professional

development and staff engagement resources are to maintaining morale, expanding job skills and enabling internal advancement processes. In response, new HR initiatives are underway to bridge the gaps in VU professional development offerings. Given the breadth, depth, and scalability considerations, we offer herein recommendations for prioritizing the solutions that will ignite quick wins and establish a long-term vision.

Solution

Phase I (immediate impact)

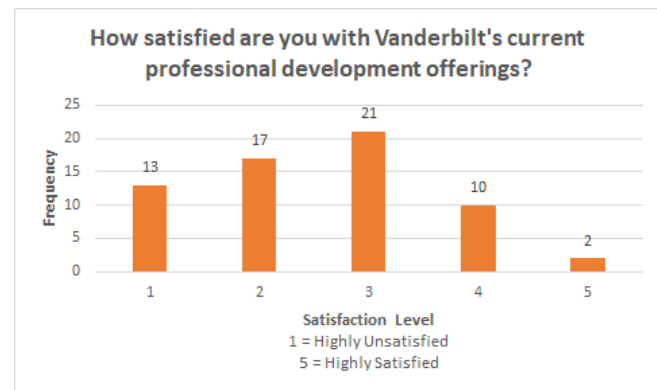
1. Mobilize campus-wide communications regarding updates to professional development offerings.
2. Improve breadth of online training and revamp user interface to better enable staff engagement.
3. Provide centralized support to expand existing campus-wide professional development programs.

Phase II (long term impact)

1. Build an all-inclusive set of professional development resources and career guidance tools, accessible via an engaging and motivational website.
2. Leverage Oracle as a hub for tracking mandatory and elective training, certifications and career roadmaps.
3. Develop a centrally coordinated set of comprehensive staff mentorship programs.

Highlights

The challenges of today's workplace necessitate a professional learning and engagement framework that enhances job training, improves communication skills, and facilitates career progression. Through the alignment of new PD development efforts by HR with USAC's most highly perceived deficiencies and priorities, Vanderbilt can respond most effectively to support the needs and career development of its staff.



The Retention Factor

According to Work Institute’s 2019 Retention Report, more than 41 million employees chose to leave their position in 2018, at a cost of \$617 billion to their former employers. The #1 factor driving their exit was lack of growth and career development.

Retention is an on-going concern for most employers as turnover is a costly expense. Historically, companies have correlated their retention rates directly with their compensation and benefits, but recent studies have shown that compensation is just one of eight factors that leads to increased employee satisfaction and overall retention (Kossivi, Xu, and Kalgora, 2016). Other retention factors include work-life balance, strong management relationships, positive company culture and work environments, defined career progression, and training opportunities.



Attracting, cultivating and retaining the highest quality personnel is critical for Vanderbilt to achieve its strategic mission. Offering diverse professional development opportunities for staff to grow at all levels demonstrates a commitment to staff and maximizes its human capital. Staff often feel their needs are neglected behind students and faculty, a unique problem which our industry peers do not face.

A platform of fully developed staff engagement and development opportunities will provide a tangible affirmation of the University’s appreciation for staff’s essential role in the Vanderbilt community, and in return, will better enable staff to express the values set forth in the student-initiated Vanderbilt Community Creed of intellectual curiosity, courage, goodwill, honesty, transparency, and respect.

VANDERBILT CREED

“Individuals who join the Vanderbilt University community embark on a lifelong journey toward greater intellectual enlightenment and personal growth. By fostering the Creed’s principles, we anchor ourselves to the University’s enduring tradition of excellence, united by a common set of values.”

What is Professional Development?

Armed with historical context and recent data trends, companies turn to offering “professional development” as a retention tool. But you’ll find the phrase “professional development” is often just a fancy term for skills training. While we agree that skills training is a valuable aspect of professional development, it represents just one of the eight pieces of the retention puzzle mentioned previously. If professional development is designed from a holistic approach, it has the potential to incorporate additional retention factors.

To better understand professional development in the words of our peers, the committee distributed a survey to all voting USAC members (n=92) to collect real data points in an effort to inform the content of this proposal. We received a 68.5% participant response rate (n=63).

Most intriguing from the survey were the responses received when asked to describe what professional development meant to them. As anticipated, we consistently received responses such as “enhancement of an existing skill or addition of a new skill that can add value to an employee.” However, we also received responses such as:

- “**Charting a path** to expand my knowledge and enhance my abilities to produce the best possible outcome for the University”
- “**Networking** opportunities”
- “**More insight** into areas of the university that I’m not typically privy to”
- “Ways to learn about new and **effective programming, emerging theories, and trends** related to students”
- “Conferences”
- “**Team building** activities”
- “**Leadership** opportunities”
- “User groups”
- “**Discussions** with my supervisor”
- “**Career progression**”

These findings confirm that one size does not fit all when discussing professional development. This emphasizes the notion that we must be creative and flexible in approaching this topic. Full survey response details can be found in **Appendix 1**. Furthermore, we anticipate the Staff Engagement Survey will provide supplementary results from a larger data set to substantiate these findings.

“Train people well enough so they can leave.
Treat people well enough so they don’t want to.”
-Richard Branson

Given feedback from Vanderbilt USAC members, current workplace trends, and the historical research, we support the use the terms **professional development and staff engagement** to embody a holistic approach that encompasses training opportunities, defined career progression tools, and community building activities. This approach can strengthen and broaden the work already underway by the HR team.

What has Vanderbilt historically offered?

A variety of professional development opportunities are currently available across campus, ranging from formal workshops and services offered by Human Resources to individual working groups established by staff members with shared interests. **Appendix 2** lists many of the available options. However, no centralized communication stream exists to identify all professional development resources at Vanderbilt.

Professional Development support provided through Vanderbilt Human Resources:

The Learn & Grow tab on the [HR web page](#) links employees to a portion of HR's professional development services.

- The [Learning and Organizational Development](#) team offers workshops to staff that facilitate learning by discussing topics relevant to your work, suggesting new tools and perspectives, demonstrating the application of new methods, and providing a space for free exchange of ideas and affirmation.
- [The Vanderbilt Leadership Academy](#) is a nine-month program for academic and administrative leaders. Access to this program is via nomination by the Chancellor or Vice Chancellors.
- The Vanderbilt Leadership Enrichment (VLE) program is a nine-month program designed to develop key leadership skills and competencies for staff who are managers or operational leaders demonstrating high potential, and whose leadership position is between front-line supervisor and director. This program requires application and selection.
- Job-specific online skills training is offered on the [Vanderbilt Oracle Learning platform](#) (formerly the Learning Exchange). Courses are available through SkillSoft, however hindered by poor navigation tools, or as assigned based on one's position and administrative permissions.
- The [EdAssist](#) program offers 70% Tuition reimbursement and auditing opportunities.
- [Feed Forward](#) is a non-compulsory performance evaluation and feedback model utilized at discretion.
- [Employee appreciation](#) is expressed through annual special events and the bestowal of Commodore Awards, divisional awards, service awards and the Diversity Award.

Professional Development support available from other Vanderbilt entities

- Offices across campus such as The Margaret Cuninggim Women's Center, The Data Science Institute, Vanderbilt Libraries, and the LGBTQI office host a number of other staff engagement opportunities to network, learn new skills, and enhance awareness.
- Employee-organized peer groups such as the Senior Administrators User Group bring together employees from all over campus that share similar functionality and responsibility.
- Under '[Health and Wellness](#)', [Performance Coaching](#) by Work/Life Connections EAP provides employees with individualized counseling on goal-setting and skill-building.
- The Business of VU program in the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Finance trains 30 employees per year on higher education business, VU governance, economics and funding.
- Independent means to promote employee mentoring have developed, including the Dean of Students Find Your Anchor Buddy program, and the Margaret Cuninggim Women's Center Mentoring Award.
- Heart and Soul awards bestowed by the Office of the Chancellor
- Basic Office 365 proficiency training is provided by Vanderbilt University Information Technology.

In sum, many of the pieces to a comprehensive professional development program exist in some form at VU. The availability of workshops and online training opportunities has been updated, but there is no framework and guidance on how staff should proceed. Furthermore, there is no centralized source of information or stream of communication to inform employees of all the professional development resources that do exist across campus. Finally, pursuit of professional development offerings at VU is disconcertingly impaired by poor website design, lack of site maintenance, and difficult navigation towards determining career growth.

What is everyone else doing?

Vanderbilt must compete with other top ranked institutions to obtain the most talented academic, research and technical staff. It is therefore prudent to gauge and adjust our professional development offerings in comparison to national academic and research institutions as well as local large companies. Success will depend on managing and maintaining recent improvements, and expansion of these developments.. Summarized in **Appendix 3** are professional development resources available at comparable academic institutions and locally-headquartered companies that garner high job satisfaction ratings. The number of staff opportunities provided by these entities is comparable to other university staff development programs reviewed, both private and public. Examples from public and private universities are given below to demonstrate the broad availability of well-developed staff resources.

Features that stand out among these programs include the following:

- Comprehensive professional development web portals
 - [U.C. Davis Learning and Development](#)
 - [Emory + YOU Your Learning website](#)
- Large selection of courses and workshops supporting all categories of career development, from basic computing and professional skills to interpersonal communication, project management, and leadership
 - [University of Kentucky Professional Development courses](#)
 - [Harvard University Career and Professional Development courses](#)
- Specific career development for skilled trades and service employees
 - [U. Mass Amherst Partnership for Worker Education](#)
 - [Harvard Internal Professionals Pathway](#) and [Bridge Program](#)
- Specialized certification programs that support internal promotion and career moves
 - [University of Arkansas Certificate programs](#)
 - [Duke Certificates of Excellence](#)
- Professional management and leadership training
 - [Emory Leadership Development Programs](#)
 - [Cornell Leadership Academy](#)
- Subscription to online courses through [LinkedIn Learning](#) or equivalent
- Tuition assistance or free course credit for advanced professional learning
 - [University of North Carolina Tuition Waiver program](#)
 - [Stanford Staff Tuition Reimbursement program](#)
- Career path/succession planning
 - [University of Florida Career Paths](#)
 - [Harvard Career Roadmaps](#)

* see notable tools below
- Cross-training, Stretch assignments
 - [U.C. Davis Cross-Training](#)
 - [Yale Experiential Learning Opportunities](#)

Notable tools for career path and succession planning among peer institutions:

Staff Career Roadmaps

Professional development should not focus solely on tangible skills trainings. A shift from box-checking evaluations to meaningful goal-setting discussions enhances individual's abilities to further their career. Career roadmaps provide a vehicle for both staff and supervisors to earmark opportunities and timelines for staff to participate in profession development offerings – including workshops, conferences, educational courses, resource groups, networking and mentoring groups. Inclusion of these endeavors in career roadmaps ensure accountability for all parties, and when well executed produce improved employee performance and growth toward jointly-identified goals.

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Staff Mentor Programs

A Forbes article "[Mentoring Matters: Three Essential Elements of Success](#)" states that 71% of Fortune 500 companies offer mentoring programs to their employees and the benefits are myriad. [A study from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania](#) shows that for individuals, good mentoring can improve career success, including promotions, raises, and better opportunities. Organizations with well executed mentoring programs are rewarded with higher levels of employee engagement, retention, and knowledge sharing. **Appendix 4** includes a number of staff mentoring plans from leading academic institutions.

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Engaging and Motivational Website

Developing and maintaining a hub where staff can engage during their careers, sets the standards for commitment to growth of employees. The Learning and Development website at UC Davis is a worthy example, showing off a comprehensive approach to investing in the betterment of staff.

<https://hr.ucdavis.edu/departments/learning-dev>

We don't just want you to work for a higher education and research institution, we want you to experience it too.

Recommended Action Plan

Through the research and design of this proposal, we recognize breadth, depth, and scalability concerns around the continued evolution of a holistic roll out of a professional development or staff engagement initiatives at Vanderbilt. Furthermore, we understand there are a number of efforts gaining traction across campus to help identify and address gaps in the PD space. For these reasons, we support a two phase approach.

Phase I (immediate impact)

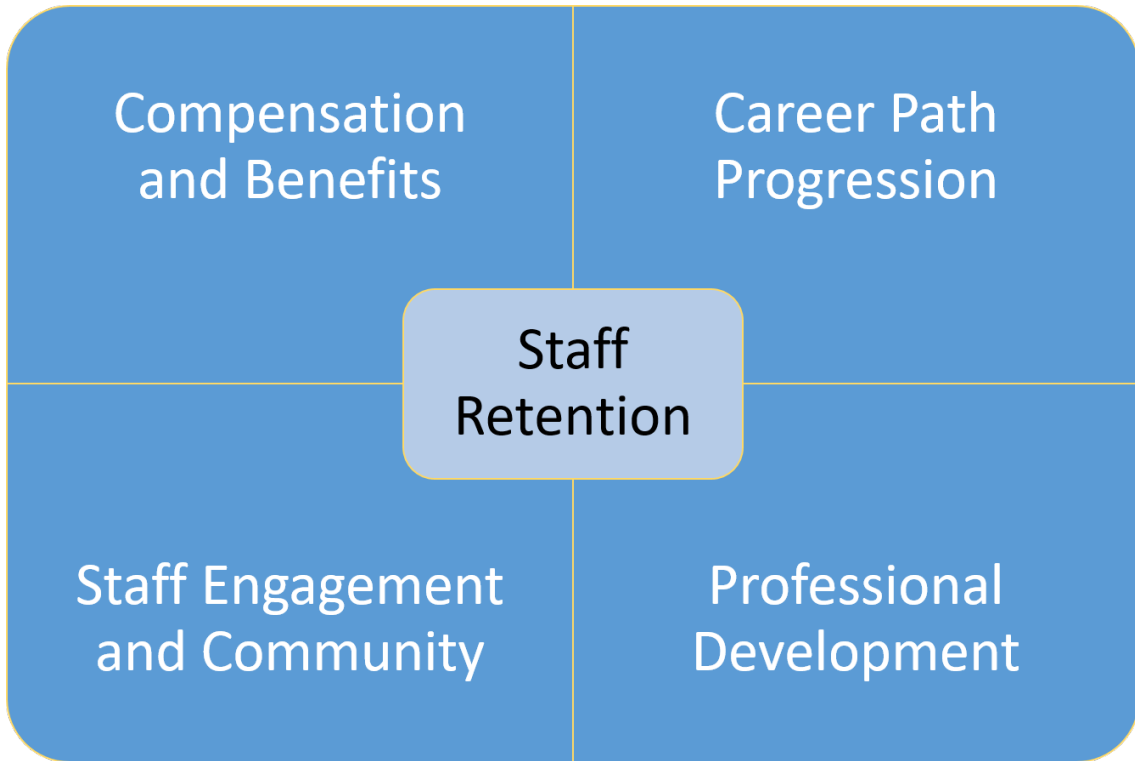
- 1. Mobilize campus-wide communications about professional development updates.**
- 2. Improved breadth of online training and revamp user interface to better enable staff engagement.**
- 3. Provide centralized support to expand existing campus-wide professional development programs.**

Phase II (long term impact)

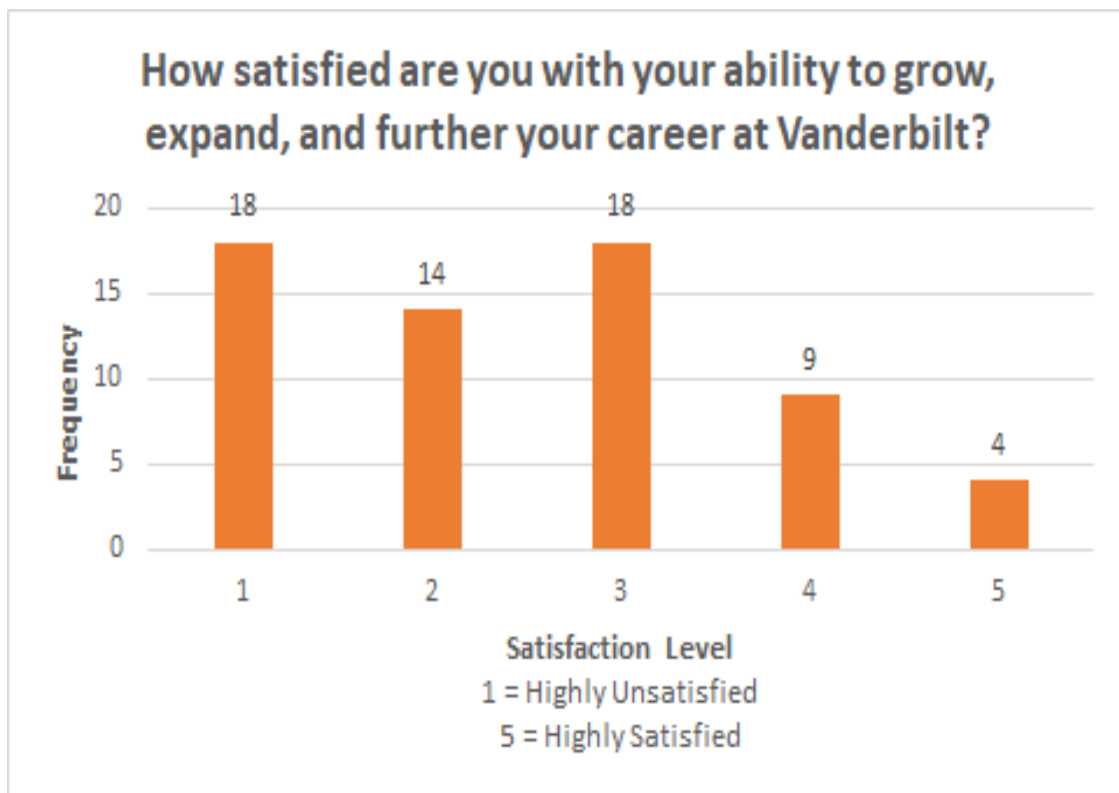
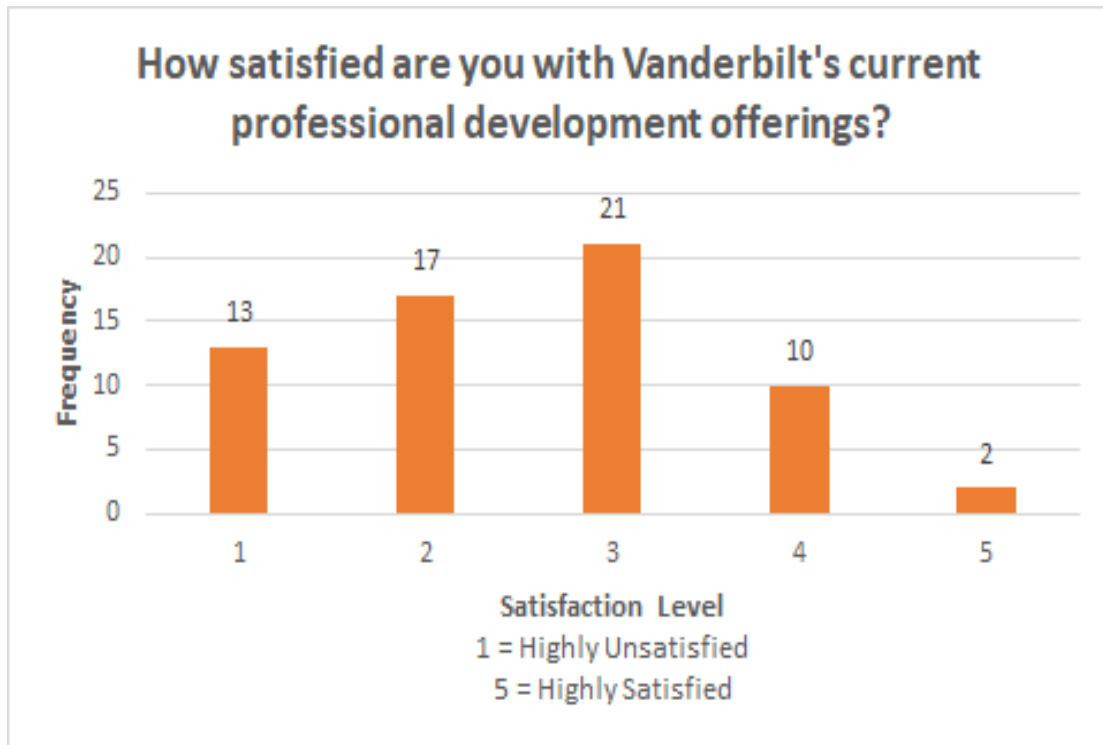
- 1. Build an all-inclusive set of professional development resources and career guidance tools, accessible via an engaging and motivational website.**
 - a. Staff Engagement Hub** to stimulate participation through a guided tour of professional development resources, career tracking tools, and employee testimonials. Based on career roadmaps, users can then navigate to breakout pages that provide a directory of specific career-relevant onsite programs and online courses, books, and videos.
 - i.e. <https://hr.ucdavis.edu/departments/learning-dev>
- 2. Leverage Oracle as a hub for tracking mandatory and elective training, certifications, and career roadmaps.**
 - a. Career Roadmap** allows staff to populate a career roadmap in Oracle, easily track their online learning, with additional workshops across campus, and academic course offerings.
 - b. Implement mandatory manager training curriculum** staff hired into mid-level management roles should be provided formal training. Furthermore, employees who are promoted into mid-level management roles should also be mandated to enroll in this training. General management training is priority, but other suggested focus areas could include:
 - Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion training
 - Unconscious Bias training
 - Increased awareness and utilization of Feed Forward program
- 3. Develop a centrally coordinated set of comprehensive staff mentorship programs.**
 - a. Staff Mentorship**
 - i. Job Shadowing Program** for employees to explore and understand various career paths they might be interested in on campus. This program could offer an insight into how other units work, challenges others face, new connections, and exposure to diverse perspectives.
 - i.e. [PeerVU](#)
 - i.e. <https://hr.cornell.edu/experiential-development/what-gig>
 - i.e. <https://www.vanderbilt.edu/deanofstudents/2018/12/12-4-buddy-program/>
 - ii. Peer Mentor Program** as an effort to establish connections across campus, making employees feel like part of a community, and have an outlet to reach out to when challenges might arise.
 - iii. Affinity/Employee Resource Group** support, as an effort to encourage peer mentorship and cooperation.

Conclusion

We believe by successfully accomplishing the above recommendations, Vanderbilt would be poised to incorporate professional development and staff engagement alongside other Human Resources support such as compensation, benefits, and career progression, thereby **building a strong centralized and structural framework for staff retention.**



Appendix 1: Survey to USAC members



Describe the phrase "professional development" as it relates to your current job.

Developing skills and maintaining the skills needed to be the best employee possible in my professional position. Charting a path to expand my knowledge and enhance my abilities to produce the best possible outcome for the University in regards to my area of concentration.

Conferences, mentoring from my boss

Professional development means staying abreast of the federal regulations required to do my job.

Enhancement of an existing skill or addition of a new skill that can add value to an employee

Opportunities for job performance improvement.

Job development as it relates to being more effective at your job and learning new things to aid in promotions.

It's practically nonexistent.

To maintain, improve, and build knowledge and skills associated with my specific job, the general office, and co-workers.

As it relates to my current job, "professional development" would describe opportunities to not only learn from the resources that are readily available to me in my office environment (cross training, on-campus events, etc.), but to also describe opportunities afforded to me to take on new responsibilities that would help me learn and grow as a professional.

We are allowed to attend yearly conferences and the office is supportive of other professional development opportunities. Overall, it's a great environment.

Professional development for me is the ability to attend conferences and workshops.

Opportunities to learn new roles on the job rather than in a classroom or online.

This would include attending writing workshops and internal communication seminars/training. I also have my CEBS so any benefit related lectures, conferences, webinars, etc.

Educational offerings specific to my job and opportunity to participate in non-job related university efforts (such as USAC).

To me, professional development is any training or knowledge transfer pertaining to skill to support your employer's general business (both in your organization or other organizations supported by your employer).

Activities that would contribute to professional development are essential to improving job performance.

Professional development means anything that will enhance my knowledge, but also provide networking opportunities. In my case, it's also a chance to magnify the presence of the library in the community.

I need more professional development opportunities based on my current role, but haven't found many at Vanderbilt.

I see professional development as having a long term plan for your growth. Many times there are not opportunities to move up. There are also very few mid-level jobs on campus and that makes it hard to grow.

To me, it is a chance to learn and grow in my current position in the hope of eventually moving up. I would like more insight into areas of the university that I am not typically privy to. I would also like an obvious career path. It's hard to even find in-person training on my current roles and systems.

Building skills to become better at my current role.

training that will improve either my personal skills or training on new systems/software, etc., to help me do my job more efficiently.

Special training in leadership and management topics; career planning/mentorship; topical EDI training/becoming a leader surrounding office culture and sensitivity; continuing education/webinars/conference opportunities; project management training

attending regional or national conferences as well as opportunities to attend specific student centered events based on space available in our office.

To better enhance new skills

To me this means "what can I do to better myself" in order to be a better employee for and to support the Vanderbilt vision.

I wanted to add that question 2 cannot be fully answered correctly because while there are some limited online learning items and we are given time to go to say some Skillpath conferences they are limited by cost and approvals by supervisors.

increase my tactical and strategic business acumen

Overall leadership opportunities

It includes continuing ed for my CPA license and also research administration professional development through online webinars and conferences.

The phrase means continued training and education that keeps one up to date on policies, procedures, and best practices as it relates to their professional practice.

Network with similar professionals at other institutions and promotions to next level

Not Much

We are limited to preset courses within our department. We can't get to advancement seminars and such unless we are

activities that provide me skills that make my work better, well informed, or efficient.

Training or education of some sort, be it software we use or some form of policy training.

Professional development relates to my job as an opportunity to build skills to better improve my ability to do my job.

opportunities to attend conferences, on-campus opportunities

Any skills that helps me in my job

the ability to learn about new and effective programming, emerging theories, trends, etc. related to students through conferences and webinars; ability to learn about ways to advance my career

Learning Exchange

I can attend conferences and have access to online learning modules.

The ability to improve in my role and develop skills and abilities to further my career.

Research administration conferences and team building activities with our department.

There are very few opportunities for professional development in my job. We get the occasional chance to attend lunch and learns but this is offered to a staff of 200+ in my department and only 30 are able to attend each month on a first come, first serve basis. Aside from this, I would say there are no professional development opportunities.

learning and developing an individual to further themselves in their career

PD, in my department, predominantly refers to participation in activities related to improving oneself as a professional. It may also serve the purpose of improving your current job and responsibilities.

There is no career path or understood way for career progression. Professional development is seen as something extra - a reward. Not as something necessary and integral to becoming a better employee and growing into something. And even in relation to conferences, it seems that if we can present, it then benefits the institution by sharing our work (but seems selfish if we just go for the learning and connections we might obtain by simply attending).

I think professional development is all inclusive. Sometimes it means learning about leadership or how to handle difficult situations. Sometimes it is about writing your resume, using LinkedIn and other platforms. Other times it is about learning or improving skills such as software or other programs. And still others - it is opportunities to meet others at Vanderbilt to network and just to know what different areas of the University does. Vanderbilt doesn't do a very good job at any of these areas - most especially the skills improvement area.

This could mean multiple things in my current job, but examples of professional development that I have had access to in my current job are NACUBO annual meeting, SACUBO conference, in-person HR training classes (various topics), and a women's conference in Nashville. It's not necessarily training, although specific, job-related training could be beneficial too.

Employees learning a variety of skills to become more efficient, capable and better workers

attend one conference each year

Professional development opportunities should provide the necessary training and mentoring to direct and enable upward mobility in one's current career path. Training should be shaped based on the type of positions sought. For instance, conference and travel funding may not be appropriate or helpful for all career paths.

Learning more about the field through books and online resources.

Learning skills to help me in my job/career at Vanderbilt

Professional development is online workshops/seminars, on-campus workshops/seminars, and maybe off campus events, if budget is approved.

Any Professional Development for my current job are opportunities I seek inside and outside Vanderbilt. I pay out of pocket for any on line workshops or memberships to access to professional development tools.

For my area there is not professional development for the whole team only a select few.

Learning that will benefit my position and growth as an employee.

There aren't, to my knowledge, professional development opportunities specific to my job. There are general professional development webinars that aren't particularly compelling to my work.

Oracle User groups, discussions with my supervisor, lunch & learns from SPA & HR; I would love to see more leadership classes and courses, I like the idea learning more about Vanderbilt as a whole (big picture & learning about other departments). I BEST prof dev I have participated in my career here at VU was VPRAD Level 1 and the 1 course (pilot) in VPRAD Level 2.

Currently, I have to fight to get any money in our budget to go to a conference or any off campus training. I do have access to Lynda.com and other online platforms, but these tend to be difficult to use. They are difficult to use because I am constantly interrupted by my administrator, his direct reports, and anyone else that is part of our department. As one of the executive assistants for my department, I am always one of the go to people for anything. Even when I block off time on my calendar, it tends to get interrupted or "more important items" take president over my professional development.

With an off campus conference or training, even if it is in Nashville, allows me to actually focus on my development of my skill set. It feels at times that in my position, providing "professional development" or "training" is seen as a loss in money despite the multiple articles describing the fact that if you have a well developed EA, the executives can actually accomplish more in their day as opposed to a poorly trained EA. You get what you pay for.....

Appendix 2: Current Professional Development Opportunities on Campus

Professional Development support provided through Vanderbilt Human Resources

- [Workshops](#)
 - Open to All Staff:
 - Myers-Briggs Type Indicator
 - Peer Interviewing
 - Workplace Communication Skills
 - Dealing with Change
 - Crucial Conversations
 - Leaders/Managers-specific:
 - New Leader Orientation
 - Becoming a Leader
 - Leading Teams Through the Stages of Change
 - Leading Teams through Conflict
 - Behavioral Interviewing
 - Compliance Fundamentals
 - Leadership Foundation Series
 - Hiring New Staff
 - Targeted Selection
 - Coaching and Developing Staff
 - Managing Performance and Behavior
 - Legal Issues
 - Leave Management
- [Organizational support for professional development](#) (planned, not implemented)
 - Proposed services to be offered by request, such as needs assessment and customized instruction
- [Vanderbilt Leadership Academy](#)
 - 9 month program for “high performing leaders”
 - 25 participants per year, selected by nomination of chancellor and vice chancellors in spring
 - Program objectives: Sharpen awareness of performance, ability to receive feedback and self-adjust; Promote behaviors that reflect learning and leading agility; Demonstrate composure and presence; Consider stakeholders’ interests, core values, and data in decision-making.
- [EdAssist](#) (full-time employees)
 - 70% reimbursement of tuition upon completion of up to three courses per academic year
 - Tuition-waived auditing of one VU course per semester, with supervisor and instructor approval
- [Feed Forward](#)
 - non-compulsory model for performance evaluation and feedback among teams
 - designed to “facilitate conversations between team members and their leaders that enhance organizational and individual success”
- [Employee appreciation](#)
 - well-executed social events, including the Turkey Toss, Day at Dyer Observatory, concerts, social pop-up events, employee picnics and tailgating events
 - Distinguished staff awards
 - Commodore Awards for significant contributions to VU’s pursuit of excellence in education, research and community service
 - Heart and Soul Awards for outstanding individual work, selfless dedication and actions that demonstrate the spirit and mission of VU
 - Divisional awards for excellence in work, commitment to VU’s mission, values and goals
 - Service awards honoring employees’ years of dedication and service
 - Diversity Award for outstanding commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion

Professional Development support available from other Vanderbilt entities

Arbitrarily promoted on organizer websites and open to scholars at all levels

- Business of VU course, Office of the Vice Chancellor for Finance
 - 5 month program, 30 participants per year selected from staff applications
 - Topics range from history of higher education to economics and administration of Vanderbilt
- [Performance Coaching](#) offered by VU Faculty and Staff Work/Life Connections
- [VUIT-sponsored online courses](#) for Office 365 software proficiency
- Mini courses i.e. GIS Programming, Python, R Studio
- Boot Camps i.e. GitHub, AWS for Librarians; Online Privacy and Intellectual Freedom
- Software Carpentries
- Working Groups i.e. Senior Administrators, Wikidata, Race Gender and Technology
- Employee Resource Groups i.e. Single Parent Group, LGBTQI+ group

- Mentoring support
 - Find Your Anchor Buddy staff mentoring program run by the Dean of Students Office
 - Margaret Cuninggim Women's Center annual Mentoring Award honors an individual who "supports women on campus through professional and intellectual development"
- [Shared governance and Policy Engagement](#) (note: page contains broken links)
 - [University Staff Advisory Council \(USAC\)](#):
 - Advisory group to the Vanderbilt University Administration
 - Comprised of 90 elected members representing >3,000 full- and part-time exempt and non-exempt staff
 - Serve as a channel to communicate information, collect feedback, and offer recommendations on issues, policies and practices that affect the staff
 - [Staff Women's Advancement and Equity Council \(Staff WAVE\)](#):
Action committee studying and addressing the key issues facing women staff including:
 - compensation
 - professional development
 - workplace safety (including sexual harassment and bullying)
 - value and respect in the workplace
 - work-life balance

Appendix 3: Professional Development Resources at Competing Institutions

Harvard University

Notable attributes: Career development tools for employees at all levels

Main areas of support:

The Center for Workplace Development (CWD)

- CDW holds over 50 on-site basic skills classes to build practical skills that support career development.
- Harvard ManageMentor is free to HU employees, offering 41 online courses in business best practices
- ‘Bridge’ ESL and GED instruction
- Internal mobility programs
 - ‘Career Roadmaps’ two-day course to explore career paths based on talents, interests and skill
 - ‘Career Conversation Meetings’ to network with HR and management in other areas
 - “Internal Professional Pathways” custom skill-building program for service and trade employees.
- Leadership development program for mid to senior level support staff, supervisors and managers
- Universal Manager Training Program
- Senior Administrator Fellowships to HU executive education program
- Executive Talent Development Program
- Organizational Development consulting to assist with development of specific staff training tools
Executive and leadership coaches and management onboarding
- ‘Community Connection’ groups for peer advising
- Tuition reimbursement (HU-100%, other-75%) for 1-2 courses per semester, based on years of service
- Volunteer opportunities
- Service Recognition Awards

Yale University

Notable attributes: Use of IDPs and Talent Profiling for internal mobility, shadowing and peer advising programs

Main areas of support:

- Professional and Career Development offers 17 basic skills workshops
- LinkedIn Learning offers 5,000 online courses with free subscription to YU employees, including access to a Learning Center with dedicated quiet workspaces and computers
- Managing at Yale program includes five core and five elective courses on essential management skills
- Job-specific skills and safety training is achieved through an online Training Management System
- Focus on internal mobility
 - Individual Development Plans to direct employee and manager
 - Experiential Learning Opportunities allow employees hands on learning by taking on a needed project outside their normal responsibilities or department
 - Talent Profiles are a system of online employee CVs that highlight training and accomplishments
 - Aspiring Manager program provides employees a glimpse into the key requirements and challenges of moving into a manager position at YU
 - Specialized skill training and certification programs in research administration, sponsored programs, and management
 - Direct access to YU recruiters assigned to positions of interest
- Eight ‘Affinity’ employee resource groups are supported by HR and peer advising groups
- Staffing & Career Development matches employees with Career Coaches and offers career assessment

Emory University

Emory + YOU Your Learning hub

- Professional Development Courses
 - 24 general courses offered across seven categories: communications, leadership, project management, performance management, HR Toolkit, customer service, and change management
 - Access to Emory Continuing Education for courses on professional development, computing and specialized certifications
 - Unlimited access to LinkedIn Learning
- Lending Library of professional development books
- **Certifications in administration and leadership: six to nine month programs**
 - Administrative Professionals: to develop and enhance administrative skills
 - Essentials of Leadership: for new managers
 - Aspiring Leaders: for staff with potential to enter management
 - Emerging Leaders: to prepare mid-level leaders for more strategic roles
 - Excellence Through Leadership: senior leader training through the School of Business.
 - Academic Leadership Program: specialized training for the next generation of academic leaders
- Mentorship
 - **Mentor Emory** program: based on common goals and expertise, mentees are matched with mentors who commit to one-on-one mentoring time and participation in group activities.
 - College Staff Consortium: group of staff mentors
 - provide information and act as resource persons in specific areas
 - pursue common concerns and make recommendations to the Dean
 - sponsor programs of interest
 - provide a sense of camaraderie among staff
- Organization Development: support units in developing customized team and individual training
- Connections staff news and professional development publication
- Staff Speaker Series: invited speakers
- ‘Engaged Citizenship’ program funds employee volunteerism, up to 8 hours/year
- Staff Recognition Awards: Award of Distinction, Employee of the Year, Service Milestone Awards

Asurion

Notable Attributes: Peer advising, network-based organization, internal promotion

Main areas of support:

- Skills training opportunities
- Mentoring program
- Internal promotion practices
- Network-based (vs hierarchical) workplace model to encourage teamwork and high employee morale
 - Structured team-building activities
 - Cross-disciplinary employee ‘journey teams’ focused on brain-storming solutions and innovation
 - Peer advising groups
 - ‘Everyday Leadership Model’ of ‘in-the-moment’ feedback and instruction, as opposed to formal performance evaluations.

Nissan North America

Notable Attributes: Overarching policy of receptiveness to employee input, equitable evaluation processes

Main areas of support:

- Training programs in engineering, technical skills, leadership and expert leader training
- ‘Shift Career System’ enables current employees to submit applications for positions in other areas of work, independent of current job postings.

- Mentoring programs and roundtables led by executive leaders
- Biannual evaluations of performance, competency, career aspirations and goals.
 - Required supervisor training in evaluation skills and career mentorship
 - Follow-up employee feedback surveys
 - Perceivable institutional responses and improvements to noted areas of employee concern
- Internal social networking site “Work-Life Balance Park”

Appendix 4: Compendium of Exemplary Staff Mentoring Programs

Emory University Mentor Emory Program

- Stated Goals:
 - Foster the professional growth of both mentors and mentees
 - Provide enhanced communication and connectivity
 - Instill a sense of belonging amongst participants
 - Help Emory retain talent
- Criteria:
 - Any full-time employee, with manager approval
- Program: Mentee-Mentor pairs are matched based on common goals and expertise. Participants are selected based on their stated goals and availability of a potential mentor.
 - Time commitment: 2-4 hours per month for 8 months
 - Mentees and mentors participate in organized program activities and meet one-on-one
- Tools and resources utilized: HR Learning & Organizational Development Department

Brown University Staff Mentoring Program

- Stated Goals:
 - Foster professional development and career growth
 - Building an inclusive culture of diverse professional networks
- Criteria:
 - Professional Staff, 2 years of service, positive performance review
- Program: Two colleagues from different departments establish a partnership, focused on the mentee's professional development, career and network growth.
 - Seven-month program
 - Match Day kicks off the program with four other formal events
 - Mentors and mentees meet monthly and attend four organized program activities
- Tools and resources utilized: Individual Development Plan, cloud-based lending library, Rosetta Stone and LinkedIn Learning
- Outcome: By the end of the formal portion of the mentor relationship, mentees will have identified and begun to implement action items to enhance their professional development, expand their professional network across campus and/or beyond, and grow their career.

Stanford Staff Mentoring Program

- Stated Goals: Enhance professional network, develop career plan, clarify professional goals, learn how to interview, listen to constructive feedback
- Criteria: worked on campus 1 year at level H, I or J
- Program
 - Cycle runs January - September
 - Mixer in November to meet potential mentors
 - Mentee ranks mentors, may have interviews
 - Matches revealed at a Match day event in late November
 - Mentors and mentees meet twice monthly for one hour

Berkeley Staff Mentorship Program

- Stated Goals: Cultivate contacts, explore challenges and enhance effectiveness as they design their personal growth and career path. Develop peer support, learn more about management and understand campus organizational culture.
- Criteria: 1 year campus experience at the AAIL, AAILI, P1-3, S1, or Staff Research Assistant classification. Participation limited to one time.

- Program
 - Cycle runs September 1 – May 31
 - Launch with networking event
 - Sessions held to allow mentees to pitch mentors
 - Interviews
 - Selections sent to committee
- Tools and resources utilized: Operated by a committee 8-10 staff and 10% FTE coordinator

[University of Wisconsin Academic Staff Mentor Match Program](#)

- Stated Goals: connect early career academic staff to a wider network of academic staff and community
- Program
 - Open to all staff
 - Cycle runs August - May
 - August/September: All academic staff receive an email invitation to participate in the program as a mentor or mentee
 - Early October: Mentor matches notified
 - Late October: Kickoff event
 - Winter and Spring: Seminars (optional, open to all Academic Staff)
 - April/May: Wrap-up event
 - May: Program evaluation
 - Matches meet on their own. Anticipated time commitment is appx 1-2 hours/month

[Mars Mentoring Programs Career Page](#)

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