



Educational and Training Opportunities

Policy Type: Administrative
Responsible Office: VCU Human Resources
Initial Policy Approved: 12/01/1993
Current Revision Approved: 08/06/2015

Policy Statement and Purpose

Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) is dedicated to providing training and professional development opportunities for faculty and staff and offers a variety of ways for employees to continue their education and enhance their professional development and growth.

Noncompliance with this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. VCU supports an environment free from retaliation. Retaliation is prohibited against any employee who brings forth a good faith concern, asks a clarifying question or participates in an investigation.

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Who Should Know This Policy

All faculty and staff are responsible for knowing this policy and familiarizing themselves with its contents and provisions.

Definitions ---

Educational Leave

Eligible employees are provided a leave of absence to participate in or complete an approved educational course.

Tuition Reimbursement

Eligible employees may be reimbursed for costs required to complete an approved, work-related educational course(s) at an institution other than VCU.

Tuition Waiver

Eligible employees can use tuition waiver as pre-payment of costs required to complete an approved educational course(s) at VCU.

Contacts ---

VCU Human Resources officially interprets this policy and is responsible for obtaining approval for any revisions as required by the policy *Creating and Maintaining Policies and Procedures* through the appropriate governance structures. Please direct policy questions to VCU Human Resources.

Policy Specifics and Procedures ---

- 1. Guidelines:** Detailed procedural information for all educational and training opportunities is available in the Human Resources' Educational and Training Opportunities Guidelines.

Courses should be taken during non-working hours. If a course is taken during working hours because it is not offered at other times, it is important to ensure compliance with the federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) as follows:

- If the employee's position is "exempt," the manager may adjust the employee's work schedule to achieve a complete 40-hour workweek.
 - If the employee's position is "non-exempt," contact your HR Consultant for guidance.
- 2. Tuition Waiver:** Tuition waiver is available for faculty and classified employees and adjunct faculty as described below. It may be used for undergraduate, graduate or first professional degree courses for academic credit at VCU as follows:
 - It covers standard undergraduate and graduate tuition, university fee, student activity fee, student government fee, technology fee and capital outlay fee.
 - It does not cover audited courses, individual lessons, private music lessons, nonstandard undergraduate and graduate tuition, books, supplies, program/course fees or English language courses.
 - It cannot be retroactively applied to previous semesters.
 - Courses do not have to be job related and should be taken during non-work hours.
 - Before submitting a tuition waiver application, the employee must have on file a completed Application for Virginia In-State Tuition Rates with VCU Records and

Registration so it can be determined whether the employee is eligible for in-state tuition rates, pursuant to Section 23-7.4 of the Code of Virginia.

- An employee will be responsible for paying the appropriate cost of tuition and fees for tuition-waived courses in which he/she withdraws before the end of the semester or session, receives a grade of less than "C," fails in a pass/fail course, changes his/her employment status from full time to part time, voluntarily separates from employment or is separated for cause by the institution prior to completing a tuition-waived course.

A. Faculty and Classified Employees: These employees may take a maximum of six credit hours per semester.

- The tuition waiver program is available to full-time (100% FTE) faculty and classified employees who are:
 - compensated from funds controlled within the institution; and
 - employed and actively working (i.e., not on leave with or without pay) on the first day of classes for any given semester.

Full-time faculty, including those not teaching during the summer, may take a maximum of six credit hours in the summer semester provided they are returning to employment with VCU in the fall.

Employees on workers' compensation or family and medical leave are eligible for tuition waiver provided they began the course while working full time.

The following employees are not eligible for tuition waiver: hourly; post-doctoral fellows; part-time; those on educational leave with or without pay; and those on conditional, personal or disciplinary leave without pay.

- Participation in the tuition waiver program is by application to the department head who will approve or deny the request prior to registration. If an ineligible employee is granted tuition waiver by his/her department, the department is charged for the cost of tuition and fees.

B. Adjunct Faculty Employees: These employees may take one course (one to three credit hours) after they complete teaching courses equivalent to nine credit hours.

- Tuition waiver must be used within the three-semester period immediately following the completion of teaching the nine credit hours. The summer semester counts as a semester. A new adjunct tuition waiver may be earned upon completion of teaching an additional nine credit hours.

Adjunct faculty are not eligible for tuition waiver if they have not completed teaching courses equivalent to nine credit hours or have failed to make use of the tuition waiver within the three-semester period immediately following completion of teaching nine credit hours.

- Participation in the tuition waiver program is by application to the respective supervisor; director, department head or chair; dean; vice president for health sciences (for MCV Campus employees) and provost or designee (for all) who will approve or deny the

request prior to registration. If an ineligible employee is granted tuition waiver by his/her department, the department is charged for the cost of tuition and fees.

- 3. Tuition Reimbursement for Courses taken at Other Educational Institutions:** Full-time faculty and classified employees may be reimbursed for job-related courses taken at other educational institutions provided the courses are not offered at VCU (classroom or online) and are directly related to the employee's job.
- The employee must complete the Tuition Reimbursement/Certification Form and is responsible for submitting a request to the department head prior to registering for a class. Department head approval verifies the employee's eligibility, the availability of departmental non-federal grant funds and that the course is not offered online or in the classroom at VCU. Upon completion of a course with a grade of "C" or better or a "pass" in a pass/fail course, the employee submits the receipt and grade to the department for tuition reimbursement from departmental funds.
 - The employee may enroll in a maximum of six credit hours per semester. This limit of six credit hours per semester includes (is not in addition to) any courses taken at VCU using tuition waiver. Courses are taken for academic credit and should be scheduled during non-working hours.
- 4. Educational Leave of Absence (ELOA) with One-Half Pay or Without Pay:** This benefit (regardless of funding source) is available for a maximum of one year to full-time faculty and classified employees who:
- have been employed by the university for at least one year;
 - are in good standing with the university, as determined by the appropriate department head;
 - have been accepted into an approved course of study at an accredited institution of higher learning; and
 - obtain the proper approvals at least 30 days in advance as noted below.

The employee must submit a written request for ELOA. The request for leave should include a copy of the school's acceptance for study and a recommendation from the department head or dean.

- The appropriate vice president may approve the educational leave, with or without pay, for staff employees provided there are sufficient department funds and reimbursement is paid with non-grant funds and staffing, and the planned course work is job related or in the institution's best interest.
- The Board of Visitors approves educational leave for faculty.

Employees do not accrue annual, sick or holiday leave while on educational leave. Existing leave balances are retained for use upon an employee's return from educational leave. Consult Human Resources for assistance.

Upon approval of the request, Human Resources completes the calculations of salary and repayment terms and forwards the Educational Leave Agreement and Promissory Note to the appropriate vice president for final signatures. Completion of the agreement also ensures continuation of benefits.

Repayment to the university is made either by return to employment with the department from which the leave was taken (for a period equal to at least twice the period of absence) or by reimbursing the actual salary paid during the leave (regardless of funding source) plus a pre-determined interest rate.

Departments must notify Human Resources if the employee terminates employment prior to completing the service payback requirement. Human Resources will work with the employee on a repayment schedule.

5. **University Learning and Development Programs:** Human Resources offers a variety of training opportunities to faculty and staff during work hours. Departmental consultations and customized training programs also are available.
 - Employees complete and have their supervisor sign an in-house course registration form.
 - Costs associated with the programs are charged to the employee's departmental budget.

6. **Outside Seminars and Continuing Education:** Full-time employees may take advantage of training and development opportunities through the Commonwealth of Virginia's Knowledge Center, administered by the Virginia Department of Human Resource Management (DHRM), and through other continuing education resources not available through university training resources. Information about outside seminars is available through HR's Learning and Development office.
 - The employee requests prior approval in writing from the department head to register for an outside seminar and completes the Tuition Reimbursement/Certification Form.
 - The department handles the employee's registration. Tuition, including books and supplies, may be covered by departmental non-grant funds if the course is job related and required by the manager. (Books and supplies typically are not covered by departmental funds if the course is not job related or required by the manager.)
 - Employees receive their regular pay when attending seminars during work hours.

Forms

1. VCU Application for Virginia In-State Tuition Rates
http://www.enrollment.vcu.edu/media/student-affairs/enrollment-services/records--registration/docs/In-State_App.pdf
2. VCU Educational Leave Agreement and Promissory Note
<http://www.hr.vcu.edu/about/forms.html#training>
3. VCU Tuition Reimbursement/Certification Form
<http://www.hr.vcu.edu/about/forms.html#training>
4. VCU Tuition Waiver Application for Full-time Faculty and Classified Staff
<http://www.hr.vcu.edu/about/forms.html#training>
5. VCU Tuition Waiver Application for Adjunct Faculty
<http://www.hr.vcu.edu/about/forms.html#training>

Related Documents

1. State Policy 4.10, Annual Leave
http://www.dhrm.virginia.gov/docs/default-source/hrpolicy/pol4_10annlv.pdf?sfvrsn=2
2. State Policy 4.15, Educational Leave
http://web1.dhrm.virginia.gov/itech/hrpolicy/pol4_15.html
3. State Policy 4.55, Sick Leave
http://www.dhrm.virginia.gov/docs/default-source/hrpolicy/pol4_55sicklv.pdf?sfvrsn=4
4. State Policy 5.05, Employee Training and Development
http://web1.dhrm.virginia.gov/itech/hrpolicy/pol5_05.html
5. State Policy 5.10, Educational Assistance
http://web1.dhrm.virginia.gov/itech/hrpolicy/pol5_10.html
6. VCU Educational Opportunities Guidelines
http://www.hr.vcu.edu/media/hr/documents/Educational_Opportunities_Guidelines.pdf
7. VCU Study-Research Leave Policy
<http://www.policy.vcu.edu/sites/default/files/Study%20Research%20Leave.pdf>
8. White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) - Uniform Administrative Requirements Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards; Final Rule
<https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2013/12/26/2013-30465/uniform-administrative-requirements-cost-principles-and-audit-requirements-for-federal-awards>

Revision History

January 16, 2009	<i>Educational and Training Opportunities</i>
August 21, 2012	<i>Educational and Training Opportunities</i>
December 19, 2014	<i>Educational and Training Opportunities</i> : Revision due to White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) -- uniform guidance for all awards issued on or after December 26, 2014 for state and federal reimbursement of tuition or remission to be in compliance.
August 06, 2015	<i>Educational and Training Opportunities</i>

FAQs

There are no FAQs associated with this policy and procedures.