Policy Title: Graduate Tuition Reimbursement Program
Policy Number: FAST-224
Revision Date: October 2018
Policies Superseded: 1252; HREO-153
Policy Management Area(s): Human Resources and Equal Opportunity

THE LANGUAGE USED IN THIS DOCUMENT DOES NOT CREATE AN EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT BETWEEN THE EMPLOYEE AND THE AGENCY. THIS DOCUMENT DOES NOT CREATE ANY CONTRACTUAL RIGHTS OR ENTITLEMENTS. THE AGENCY RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REVISE THE CONTENT OF THIS DOCUMENT, IN WHOLE OR IN PART. NO PROMISES OR ASSURANCES, WHETHER WRITTEN OR ORAL, WHICH ARE CONTRARY TO OR INCONSISTENT WITH THE TERMS OF THIS PARAGRAPH CREATE ANY CONTRACT OF EMPLOYMENT. COASTAL CAROLINA UNIVERSITY’S OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY HAS THE AUTHORITY TO INTERPRET THE UNIVERSITY’S HUMAN RESOURCES POLICIES.

SUMMARY:

Faculty and staff in FTE (slotted), temporary grant, time-limited, research grant and unclassified non-teaching positions may apply for Graduate Tuition Reimbursement for courses taken at other accredited South Carolina academic institutions or for online classes taken from accredited out-of-state institutions.

POLICY:

I. Graduate Tuition Reimbursement for Faculty and Staff

A. Eligibility
   1. Faculty
      A faculty member must be employed in an FTE (slotted) position, have successfully completed six months of employment and have been admitted to a graduate program at another university.
   2. Staff
      A staff member or unclassified nonteaching employee must be employed at least 30 hours per week in an FTE (slotted), temporary grant, time-limited, research grant or unclassified position, have completed six months of service and have been admitted to a graduate program at another university.
B. Program Provisions
   1. The Graduate Tuition Reimbursement Program is based on funding availability.
   2. Payment will only be made for programs other than those offered at Coastal Carolina University.
   3. Graduate programs must be from a South Carolina accredited institution or an online program from an accredited out-of-state institution, as determined by the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education.

C. Reimbursement/Payment
   1. The University will reimburse or pay directly at the end of the semester if the institution will allow, tuition for courses approved for reimbursement and completed with a grade of “B” or better. The number of credit hours reimbursed may not exceed six in a regular academic semester or during the summer as a whole.
   2. Because the funds available for tuition assistance are limited, it may not be possible to make awards to all applicants in a given semester.
   3. Any employee who fails or withdraws from a course before completion will not be reimbursed.
   4. Funds and availability are awarded on a semester-by-semester basis, and funding is not guaranteed for the employee’s pursuit of a graduate degree, although every effort will be made to allow an approved degree completion or the completion of a specified set of coursework.
   5. Reimbursement for graduate courses is limited to six credit hours per semester, at the CCU in-state tuition rate applicable to the enrolled program of study. Reimbursement will not exceed the tuition rate of the institution the employee is attending.
   6. Should an employee be separated from the University, voluntarily or involuntarily for cause, at any time within the two-year period immediately following his/her most recent semester as a student, all or half (see Section 8. below) of the full tuition cost for the respective class(es) taken must be paid back to the University. The tuition cost will be deducted from the employee’s remaining paychecks and/or annual leave payout (if applicable). Any monies remaining after the deduction will be paid to the employee. Should the amount of the paycheck fall short of total payment required, the employee will owe the balance to the University. The employee has a maximum of 60 days by which to pay the full amount owed or to make payment arrangements. All payment arrangements must be approved by the CFO. Exceptions to this section may only be made by the President or his designee.
   7. After 12 months of continuous service, based on the semester enrolled and following the successful completion of class(es), the amount owed by the employee-student is one-half of the full tuition cost for the course(s). After 24 months of continuous service, based on the semester enrolled and
following the successful completion of class(es), the student-employee will not owe CCU any balance.

(a) For more information regarding employee tuition programs, visit HREO FAQs Employee Tuition Programs.

D. Procedures for Admission and Enrollment

1. Employee completes the Graduate Tuition Reimbursement Request form (available online at the Human Resources and Equal Opportunity forms section of the University website) and submits the completed form to HREO no later than 30 days prior to the start of the course. An Education Plan approved by the employee’s respective vice president and dean (if faculty) stating how the program or coursework will benefit the employee in his/her role at Coastal Carolina University, as well as how it will benefit the University, must also be submitted along with the request form.

2. **First-time applicants** must include proof of acceptance into a graduate program.

3. Applicants must submit a final grade report to HREO along with proof of tuition payment for each approved course before receiving tuition reimbursement. The institution can also secure payment directly from Coastal Carolina University, but this is not intended to create a contractual or debtor/creditor relationship between the institution and Coastal Carolina University.

4. HREO sends approved Graduate Tuition Reimbursement form and proof of tuition payment to Accounts Payable for processing of reimbursement or payment. The grade report reflecting a “B” or better in the course will be retained by Human Resources in the employee’s file.