



08.410

Training and Staff Development Educational Options

Authority:	Chancellor
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Source of Authority:	UNC Policy 300.3.1[R]
Related Links:	State Human Resources Policies
Responsible Office:	Human Resources

I. Policy

The university is committed to assisting employees in participating in educational opportunities and training programs to enhance their work performance and/or career goals. As part of the Employee Performance Management Program, supervisors are encouraged to assist and support employees in developing plans for improvement and professional development. The university encourages employees to participate in education and training programs as follows:

- A. The university offers training programs through Human Resources, other university departments, and the State of North Carolina.
- B. Departments may sponsor employees for off-campus workshops, conferences, or seminars through professional organizations and other business entities.
- C. Educational leaves (with or without pay) are possible.
- D. Employees may participate in regular university courses on a space-available basis.

II. Employees Covered Under Policy

This policy applies to all university employees (including EPA, faculty, and staff) although various educational assistance programs have different eligibility criteria:

- A. Training and professional development opportunities are available to all employees, with supervisory approval.

- B. The UNCW application fee benefit and undergraduate orientation fee waiver are available to all active employees (with permanent appointments) and their dependents.
- C. Tuition reimbursement is available to permanent employees under the State Educational Assistance Program.
- D. Spring and fall tuition waiver, summer school tuition fee benefit, and regular fee waiver (for any term) are available to all permanent employees who participate in TSERS (Teachers and State Employees Retirement System) or ORP (Optional Retirement Program).

III. Definitions

- A. **Academic Course Work**
Academic course work for credit or non-credit at an accredited educational institution (a high school, business school, technical institution, community college, correspondence school, or four-year college or university).
- B. **Training Programs**
Workshops or seminars, usually non-credit, of short duration (one day to one week) offered by trained instructors.
- C. **Job-Required Training**
 - 1. Courses or training programs which provide knowledge and skills directly related to maintaining or improving job skills required for satisfactory performance in the employee's present position.
 - 2. Courses mandated by law or regulation, or courses required by the employer in order for the employee to retain the job.
- D. **Job-Related Training**
 - 1. Courses or training programs directly related to the employee's current position, current classification or classification series, or likely career progression with the state. (This does not include courses for incumbent employees who do not meet the minimum educational requirements for the job.)
 - 2. Courses included in an academic program which are directly related to the job or current classification or classification series and are necessary to complete a degree program (where the degree program has been determined to be job related even though the course itself is not job related). (This does not include courses for

incumbent employees who do not meet the minimum educational requirements for the job.) A memo requesting approval of a job-related degree program will need to be submitted through Human Resources to the appropriate Vice Chancellor.

- E. Personal Interest
Courses or training programs that are neither job related nor university sponsored.

IV. Prior Approval Requirement

Approval by the employee's supervisor is always required prior to the beginning of classes for any tuition waived or tuition benefit class, educational assistance, participation in workshops, or participation in off-campus training activities. Prior approval of the budget authority is also required if charges will be made to the departmental account. The employee's supervisor and department head will need to re-approve any change to the original request for tuition waiver/benefit and fee waiver (such as title of course, dates, and times of classes, etc.); and a copy of the approved changes will need to be sent to Human Resources. Educational leaves require approval as indicated in sub-section V (C).

V. Work Time and Educational Leave

- A. Job Responsibilities
Each employee should recognize that his/her job obligations have highest priority and may require the employee to forego educational opportunities or to withdraw from a course or miss classes to fulfill work requirements.
- B. Use of Work Time for Training
Work time may be used for job-related courses or university sponsored workshops, subject to supervisory approval. Work time must be provided for job-required courses.
- C. Educational Leaves
Employees who wish to take courses should do so on their own time during non-work hours if possible. If the course is available only during working hours, leaves are available as outlined below:

Educational leave with pay is limited to one course per academic term and may be granted on recommendation of the employee's immediate supervisor, with the approval of the department head, if the course is only available during working hours and is job related. Educational leave with pay may also be provided for university-sponsored workshops.

Educational leave without pay may be granted on recommendation of the employee's immediate supervisor, with the approval of the department head, (or

an employee's work schedule may be rearranged so time can be made up) when a course that is not job related is only available during working hours. Extended educational leave without pay may be granted for up to one year on recommendation of the immediate supervisor and with the approval of the department head and the Director of Human Resources.

D. Course Preparation

All course preparation will need to be done outside the employee's work hours. Educational leave may not be requested for course preparation.

E. Time Sheets

For SPA employees, educational leave should be documented on the monthly time sheets. (See Policy 08.210)

VI. Financial Aid

The university offers financial assistance to employees seeking educational opportunities through the tuition and fee waiver, tuition reimbursement and summer school tuition benefit programs.

Federal regulations require that receipt of tuition or fee waivers, tuition benefits, or tuition reimbursements be treated as financial resources which may impact federal and state aid awards. Therefore, employees applying for financial aid must disclose tuition or fee waivers, benefits, or expected reimbursements to the Financial Aid & Veterans Services Office as a part of their financial resources. Contact your Financial Aid counselor for specific details.

VII. Tuition Waiver

Under UNC Board of Governors' policy, all permanent UNCW employees participating in TSERS or ORP retirement systems are eligible for tuition waiver for up to three credit or non-credit courses per academic year (fall and spring semesters). Tuition waiver cannot be used for summer school courses.

Eligible institutions are UNC Wilmington and other branches of the UNC system. Application or pre-registration procedures may differ among UNC institutions. It is the employee's responsibility to be familiar with any variations in procedures

VIII. Tuition Benefit

Under UNCW policy, all permanent UNCW employees participating in TSERS or ORP retirement systems are eligible for tuition benefit for one credit or non-credit course for each summer session. Tuition benefit is available only for courses at UNCW.

IX. Regular Fee Waiver

Under UNCW policy, all regular fees are waived for eligible employees enrolled at UNCW during any term (fall, spring, and summer terms). All permanent UNCW employees participating in TSERS or ORP retirement systems are eligible for regular fee waiver. Special course fees are not waived.

X. Application Fee Benefit

Under UNCW policy, all active UNCW employees with permanent appointments (and their dependents) are eligible for the application fee benefit paid by the UNCW Foundation Staff Support & Development Fund.

XI. Undergraduate Orientation Fee Waiver

Under UNCW policy, all active UNCW employees with permanent appointments (and their dependents) are eligible for an undergraduate orientation fee waiver, which is processed through the UNCW Orientation Office.

XII. Tuition Reimbursement

A. Use of Tuition Reimbursement

Generally, university employees rely on the Board of Governors tuition waiver and UNCW tuition benefit and fee waiver programs for academic course work – particularly if this course work is taken at UNCW or is within the UNC system.

Tuition reimbursement allows permanent employees to receive tuition reimbursement for courses that are deemed beneficial to both the university and the employee and that serve to develop knowledge, skills, and abilities directly related to the employee's current classification. Tuition reimbursement cannot be used in conjunction with tuition waiver or tuition benefit in the same semester for academic course work that the employee initiates.

Tuition reimbursement is normally used for job-related educational expenses outside of UNCW. Tuition reimbursement can also be used (although rarely is used) for UNCW tuition when the employee is already using his or her tuition waiver or tuition benefit privilege and the department initiates a request that the employee take an additional course because of job relatedness of the course.

B. Prior Approval Criteria

Prior approval for credit or audited classes is required and is based on job-relatedness of the course, funds available in the departmental budget for educational reimbursement, and date and time the course is offered.

- C. **Eligible Institutions**
Eligible institutions are accredited high schools, business schools, community colleges, technical institutions, four-year colleges, universities, accredited correspondence schools, and any other institution approved by the State Personnel Director.

- D. **Tuition Reimbursement Rates and Limits**
If funds are available in the departmental budget, eligible employees may be reimbursed for 100% of actual costs of tuition, registration, and laboratory fees upon successful completion of the course. (See subsection XII (E) below.) Reimbursement is limited to 10 semester hours or 16 quarter hours credit per academic term. Reimbursement is limited each fiscal year to a maximum of 20 semester hours or 32 quarter hours credit, but not for more than four courses.

- E. **Eligibility for Reimbursement upon Successful Completion.** A permanent employee will be eligible for reimbursement if the employee:
 - 1. Completes the course
 - 2. Receives a minimum "grade C" or a comparable passing grade
 - 3. Attends 85% of the classes if auditing, and
 - 4. Is employed in the same agency throughout the entire course (except in a reduction of force).

XIII. Training Programs

Supervisors and employees are encouraged to work together to outline an employee's performance/work plan for additional training and education as part of the employee's overall career goals.

- A. **UNCW Sponsored Workshops.**
 - 1. Training programs offered through Human Resources, other university departments, or the Office of State Personnel include the following:
 - a. Training to enhance employees' performance in their current positions.
 - b. Training to enhance employees' skills or knowledge for future positions.

- c. Workshops such as New Employee Orientation, Safety Training, Retirement Planning, Career Strategies, Stress Management, and other general informational sessions.
 2. Supervisors are encouraged to allow employees to participate in these general informational sessions during working hours. The time is recorded as work time. For programs that require a fee, Human Resources will charge the Banner fund designated by the department.
- B. Other Training Available
 1. In some instances workshops, seminars, and conferences that support an employee's job performance are available through professional organizations and business entities.
 2. Departments must abide by established travel policies and procedures as appropriate when employees attend such workshops, seminars, and conferences.
 3. Departments will register and pay for outside workshops through the Check Request process.

XIV. Requests For Tuition and Fee Waiver (Or Tuition Benefit and Fee Waiver For Summer School)

- A. Admission to the University
 1. Prior to applying for tuition and fee waiver (or tuition benefit and fee waiver for summer school), the employee will need to be accepted by the Admissions Office of the institution offering the intended course of study. It is the employee's responsibility to meet admission requirements. Please note that tuition benefit for summer school is available only for courses at UNCW. For tuition waiver, eligible institutions are UNCW and other branches of the UNC system.
 2. Re-enrollment will need to occur after initial enrollment only if not taking a course in each subsequent semester (summer sessions excluded).
 3. If only auditing a course and not taking any course for credit, the employee does not have to meet admission requirements. Audit application forms are available in the Registrar's Office. Contact the Registrar's Office for assistance regarding audit procedures.

B. Registration and Pre-Registration at UNCW

1. Register (or pre-register if currently enrolled) in the same manner as other UNCW students to ensure course availability and determine the course number, section number, and dates and times of the classes.
2. If you decide not to take a course for which you have registered, you will need to follow the established procedures for withdrawal from the class or the university.

C. Application for Tuition Waiver and Fee Waiver (or Tuition Benefit and Fee Waiver for Summer School).

1. After registering for the course, complete an Application for Tuition Waiver or Benefit and Fee Waiver. Forms may be obtained from the Human Resources website at: <http://www.uncw.edu/hr/documents/Tuition&BenefitWaiverForm.pdf>. Submit the form to the employee's supervisor, the department head, and Human Resources for approval. After all approvals are obtained, Human Resources will make final distribution as indicated on the form.
2. Prior to completing this form, the employee will need to be admitted to the institution offering the intended course if the course is being taken for academic credit. In addition, the employee will need to have already registered for the course to ensure course availability and to determine the specific course number, section number, and days/time the employee will be attending the course.
3. Obtain approval of the immediate supervisor and department head before submitting the form to Human Resources. (Please note that you must submit this form prior to the payment due date to prevent cancellation of classes. The drop/add date is the deadline date for processing late registrations.)
4. Upon receipt of the completed form, Human Resources will determine the eligibility of the employee. If eligible, Human Resources will keep a copy of the authorized form, and send a copy to the Cashier's Office, and the employee.
5. If you make any class changes (such as title of course, dates and times of classes, etc.) after submitting the original Application for Tuition Waiver or Benefit and Fee Waiver form, you will need to submit a revised form, approved by your supervisor, department head, and Human Resources.

- D. Other Institutions in the UNC System.
 - 1. If the enrolling institution is not UNCW but is in the UNC system, forward two copies of the tuition and fee waiver form (or similar form required by the respective institution) to the Director of Admissions of the enrolling institution. Human Resources will retain a copy of the form.
 - 2. All further contact shall be between the applicant and the enrolling institution.

XV. Requests For Tuition Reimbursement

- A. Obtain an *Application for Tuition Reimbursement* from Human Resources.
- B. Submit the form to your immediate supervisor and department head for approval.
- C. Forward approved forms to Human Resources for certification of eligibility. If approved for eligibility, retain a copy of the form until completion of the approved course.
- D. Upon completion of the course, submit the receipt for the course and verification of the passing grade (or, if auditing, verification of the required attendance) to Human Resources with a completed Check Request from the department.

XVI. Requests for Application Fee Benefit and/or Orientation Fee Waiver For Permanent Employees Or Dependents

- A. Obtain application forms from Human Resources website at: <http://www.uncw.edu/hr/training-tuition.html>.
- B. Submit completed forms to Human Resources for eligibility certification.
- C. Human Resources will retain the original approved form and will distribute the remaining copies as indicated on the form.

XVII. Training Programs

- A. Human Resources and State Personnel Training Programs
 - 1. Programs offered through Human Resources or State Personnel are listed in the "Staff Training and Development" booklet published by Human Resources.

2. Register for these training programs by completing a copy of the registration form available in the training booklet. Send the form to Human Resources via campus mail or by FAX (962-3840). You may also register by telephoning extension 7773 or by sending an e-mail to the e-mail address listed in the booklet.
3. For workshops charging a fee, register two weeks prior to the scheduled workshop. Include the fee amount, Banner fund to be charged, and authorizing signature of the budget authority on the registration form. Fees will be debited to the departmental fund indicated on the form.
4. If unable to attend a course for which you have registered, telephone extension 7773, so that another employee can be scheduled in your place.

B. Computer Workshops Sponsored by ITSD

1. Computer workshops available are listed in the "Staff Training and Development booklet" published by Human Resources.
2. Register for computer workshops by calling extension 4357.

C. Other Workshops, Seminars, and Conferences

1. Follow established UNCW travel policies and procedures as appropriate.
2. Pay registration fees via a Check Request.

HR 4.10 – Training & Staff Development Educational Options

Appendix A

Educational Options Available at UNCW

Effective: Sept. 21, 2000

Supersedes: May 11, 1999

	Tuition Waiver	Tuition Benefit	Regular Fee Waiver	Application Fee Benefit	Undergrad Orientation Fee Waiver	Tuition Reimbursement	Training Programs
Term/Limit	Fall and spring semesters. Up to two courses per academic year.	Summer sessions only. Limited to one credit or non-credit course for each summer session	Available for fall, spring, and summer terms.	N/A	N/A	Limited to cost of tuition, registration, and lab fees. Limited to 10 semester hrs. or 16 quarter credit hrs. per academic term. Limited to 20 semester hrs. or 32 qtr. hrs. each fiscal year, but not for more than 4 courses.	N/A
Must Be Job Related	No	No	No	N/A	N/A	Yes	No
Eligible Participants <i>(subject to prior approval of supervisor for course)</i>	Permanent employees participating in TSERS or ORP retirement system	Permanent employees participating in TSERS or ORP retirement system	Permanent employees participating in TSERS or ORP retirement system	Active, permanent employees and their dependents	Active, permanent employees and their dependents	Permanent employees (must be employed in same agency through entire course, except in reduction of force)	All employees
Subject to Satisfactory Completion of Course	No	No	No	N/A	N/A	Yes - Must complete course, receive minimum grade "C" or comparable passing grade, attend 85% of classes if auditing.	No
Eligible Institutions	UNCW and other UNC institutions	UNCW only	UNCW only	UNCW only	UNCW only	Accredited high schools, business schools, community colleges, technical institutions, 4-year colleges, universities, accredited correspondence schools, or other institutions approved by State Personnel Director.	N/A
Policy / Sponsor	UNC Board Of Governors policy	UNCW policy	UNCW policy	UNCW policy. Paid by UNCW Employee Educational Benefit Fund.	UNCW policy. Processed through Orientation Office.	State Educational Assistance Program policy. Paid from departmental budget.	Human Resources, other UNCW depts., and State of NC. Other training may be available from business and professional organizations