

COLLEGE of CHARLESTON

OFFICIAL POLICY

9.3.10

Employee Tuition Assistance Program (ETAP)

6/8/2021

Policy Statement

The College of Charleston is committed to recruiting, retaining and developing outstanding employees, and the College understands the value of higher education in doing so. As authorized by South Carolina State Code of Laws (59-111-15 & 59-112-60), and the State Tuition Assistance Guidelines, the College provides eligible employees with an Employee Tuition Assistance Program (ETAP) designed to encourage professional growth, enhance employee success, and support employee career development.

Faculty and staff are eligible for participation in this program regardless of race, sex, gender, age, color, religion, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, genetics, protected veteran status, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions.

Policy Manager and Responsible Department or Office

Vice President of Human Resources; Office of Human Resources

Policy

A. Eligibility

1. Faculty

- a. To be eligible to receive tuition assistance, faculty must be employed in a permanent FTE, time-limited, or temporary grant position and have

successfully completed one semester of employment with the College. The determination of meeting the one semester employment requirement does not include previous employment and is based on the official date that classes begin as determined by the academic calendar for the particular session or course for which the applicant is seeking assistance.

- b. The employee must have been admitted to the College of Charleston through the appropriate admissions process (degree, non-degree or graduate admission) or be eligible to enroll as a continuing student.
- c. Faculty who have received notice of appointment non-renewal are not eligible to participate in the ETAP for the academic term(s) following notification of non-renewal.

2. Staff

- a. To be eligible to receive tuition assistance, staff must be employed at least thirty hours per week in a permanent FTE, time-limited, or temporary grant position, and have satisfactorily completed six (6) months of employment with the College. The determination of meeting the six months employment requirement does not include previous employment and is based on the official date that classes begin as determined by the academic calendar for the session or course for which the applicant is seeking assistance.
- b. The employee must have been admitted to the College of Charleston through the appropriate admissions process (degree, non-degree or graduate admission) or be eligible to enroll as a continuing student.

B. Program Provisions

1. Eligible faculty and staff may take up to six (6) credit hours (undergraduate or graduate) per **academic term***, at no charge, on a space available basis. Participants taking additional courses will pay the regular tuition rate in effect at the time of enrollment.
2. The regular application fee will be waived; however, ETAP does not pay for other expenses incurred or required by the course such as textbooks, field trips, laboratory fees, technology fees, etc. Special fees for admission in some graduate areas will not be waived.
3. Faculty and staff must be admitted to the College of Charleston through the appropriate admissions process (degree, non-degree or graduate admission), or eligible to enroll as a continuing student, and complete an application for ETAP. Applications must be approved by the requesting employee's department head and the Office of Human Resources.
4. Participants must complete and pass the course(s) taken at the end of the

*For purposes of this policy, "academic term" is defined as the (1) fall semester, (2) spring semester, and (3) the summer term. There are a total of three (3) academic terms per year. The "summer term" is defined as the time between classes ending in May and beginning in August.

approved term to remain eligible for tuition costs covered under this program. Participants will be ineligible to apply in the subsequent academic term and will be required to reimburse the College for any course in which they fail to meet this criteria. The ETAP does not include course audits. A course status of "I" (incomplete) is not considered a passing grade and is not eligible for funding until a passing grade is received.

5. Class Scheduling

- a. Whenever possible, faculty and staff are asked to enroll in classes during hours which do not conflict with their College employment obligations; however, when an approved class cannot be scheduled during off hours, the department head or director may elect to adjust the work schedule. Department heads and directors may deny participation in ETAP if the scheduled time of the course would interfere with the academic or business needs of the department.
 - b. When an approved class cannot be scheduled during non-work hours and it is not feasible to adjust work schedules, participants who earn annual leave may be allowed to take annual leave for the purpose of attending class. Authorized leave without pay may also be used to attend class. Both annual leave and authorized leave without pay must be approved in advance by the department head or director. Supervisors are responsible for accurately monitoring employee work and leave time for participating employees.
6. If an ETAP participant's employment with the College is terminated or otherwise ends for any reason during the semester in which the approved course is in progress, the participant will be responsible for full payment of all course fees awarded by the grant program.
 7. Employment status must be in good standing in relation to conduct and job performance.
 - a. An employee who has received disciplinary action or a warning notice of substandard performance or similar reprimand in the past year is not eligible to participate in ETAP.
 8. This benefit/award may be taxable. Faculty and staff who participate should contact their tax preparer for guidance on this issue.
 9. Participation in the ETAP may be limited or ended at any time by the College dependent upon the availability of funding and staffing considerations.

C. ETAP Administration

1. The Office of Human Resources is responsible for the administration of the ETAP, including:

- a. verifying initial and continued eligibility, and
- b. ensuring that the participant's initial and continued participation complies with federal tax laws, state laws and regulations, and College policy.

Departments/Offices Affected by the Policy

All departments and offices at the College of Charleston are affected by this policy.

Procedures Related to the Policy

For more information or to apply for the ETAP, contact the [Office of Human Resources](#).

Related Policies, Documents or Forms

[State of SC Tuition Assistance Guidelines](#)
 South Carolina State Code of Laws 59-111-15 & 59-112-60
 The online application form can be accessed on the [Office of Human Resources website](#).

Issue Date: 6.8.21 Date of Policy Revision: 6.8.21	Next Review Date: 6.8.2026
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POLICY APPROVAL
(For use by the Office of the Board of Trustees or the Office of the President)

Policy Number: 9.3.10

President or
 Chairman, Board of Trustees  Date: 6/9/2021