

Policy 1402

Faculty-Staff Waiver of Tuition Program for Non Degree-Seeking Coursework at JMU

Date of Current Revision: November, 2008

Primary Responsible Officer: Director, University Business Office

Secondary Responsible Officer: Director, Human Resources

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to outline the university's tuition waiver program for non-degree seeking coursework at JMU in support of the university's commitment to employee development and fulfillment.

2. AUTHORITY

The Board of Visitors has granted the president the responsibility for the university's effective operation, to include the development of its faculty and staff, and the authority to dictate policies and procedures in that effort.

3. DEFINITIONS

Non-Degree Seeking Coursework

An individual applying for tuition waiver through this policy is considered non-degree-seeking if the total number of JMU credit hours earned, to include the credit hours represented by the course that is the subject of the current tuition waiver application, is 12 or fewer. In short, a faculty or staff member taking credit hours 1 through 12 at JMU is considered non degree-seeking.

Degree Seeking Coursework

An individual applying for tuition waiver through this policy is considered degree-seeking if the total number of JMU credit hours earned, to include the credit hours represented by the course that is the subject of the current tuition waiver application, is 13 or more. In short, a faculty or staff member taking credit hours 13 and up at JMU is considered degree-seeking. Degree-seeking tuition waiver applications are addressed in Policy 1405 and are not considered in this policy.

4. APPLICABILITY

Except where noted, this policy applies to full time employees, wage or part-time employees, and emeritus faculty and staff.

ROTC employees may enroll in credit courses pursuant to this policy.

Clinical faculty members and Cooperative Education Partners in the teacher education program who have earned 300 tuition exchange units may use the vouchers earned to enroll in any 3 hour credit course at JMU where space is available with approval from the Education Support Center.

5. POLICY

In support of James Madison University's commitment to the continued professional and personal development of employees, full and part-time faculty and staff, non-student wage employees and emeritus faculty and staff may enroll in James Madison University credit courses of instruction and have normal tuition or tuition deposit fees waived within the terms of this policy.

The taxability or non-taxability of tuition waivers for employees is based on the Internal Revenue Code and is subject to change.

5.1 Eligibility

The following eligibility restrictions and guidelines apply:

- 5.1.1 New full-time instructional faculty members and administrative & professional faculty members are eligible to apply for non-degree-seeking tuition waiver upon employment.
- 5.1.2 New full-time classified employees are eligible to apply for non-degree-seeking tuition waiver for courses that begin after the day of their six-month anniversary of employment as long as they receive a rating of 'Contributor' on their six-month Probationary Progress Review.
- 5.1.3 Emeritus faculty and staff are eligible to apply for non-degree-seeking tuition waiver upon being granted the emeritus designation.
- 5.1.4 Full-time faculty members who are not under a summer teaching contract are eligible to apply for non-degree-seeking tuition waiver for courses taken during the summer semester(s) upon the approval of their supervisor *and* dean in the form of signatures on the tuition waiver form.
- 5.1.5 Part-time faculty members are eligible to apply for non-degree-seeking tuition waiver for courses taken in any semester in which they have an active teaching assignment or in any semester that begins within six months following the last day of their last active teaching assignment. However, part-time faculty must have the signatures of both their supervisor and dean on the tuition waiver form whenever applying for tuition waiver.
- 5.1.6 Non-student wage employees are eligible for a non-degree-seeking tuition waiver after 1000 hours of employment and may apply for another tuition waiver after each subsequent 1000 hours. However, a wage employee's eligibility for waiver is not cumulative. Once a waiver is issued, eligibility will not exist again until the employee has worked another 1000 hours. (See exceptions below.)

(Example: A wage employee has worked 2425 hours since becoming employed or since the issuance of a previous tuition waiver. The employee is eligible for waiver. However, once a waiver is issued, the 2425 hours are 'zeroed out' and the wage employee must work an additional 1000 hours to be eligible for a subsequent waiver and then another 1000 hours to be eligible for another waiver, etc.)
- 5.1.7 Non-student wage employees, who have been continuously employed for at least two (2) years and who have worked at least 2000 hours over the course of the previous two (2) years, are eligible to have tuition waived for two courses and two labs per calendar year (one course and one lab per semester) each calendar year beginning with the semester after the two-year anniversary is reached.
- 5.1.8 Non-student wage employees, who are nine-month employees, (the job mandates a break in employment) are eligible for a waiver for two courses and two labs per calendar year (one course and one lab per semester) after their two-year anniversary. To be eligible they must have worked at least 2000 hours over the course of the previous two years. They are only eligible for a waiver of tuition for courses taken during the time they are actively working.

- 5.1.9 Employees classified as 'part-time non-teaching' are eligible to apply for non-degree-seeking tuition waiver for one class and one lab in any semester in which they are employed by the university. Typically, these employees are research assistants, computer lab assistants, etc.
- 5.1.10 Part-time administrative & professional faculty members are eligible for a waiver for two courses and two labs per calendar year in any semester in which they are employed by the university.

5.2 Limitations:

- 5.2.1 Applicants who are full time faculty or staff or emeritus faculty or staff may have tuition waived for up to two courses and one lab each semester and per summer.
- 5.2.2 Applicants who are part-time instructional faculty or part-time administrative & professional faculty may have tuition waived for up to one course and one lab each semester and per summer.
- 5.2.3 Waiver of tuition is not authorized for private vocal or instrumental instruction or for non-credit courses.
- 5.2.4 Approval to register for a course and receive waiver of tuition is not authorized for courses offered during normal working hours except when the signing authorities have determined that the following criteria are met:

- The course relates directly to the individual's assigned duties or is required for a degree-seeking student.

and

- Absence from work to attend classes does not exceed a total of four working hours per week regardless of whether one or two classes are taken per semester.

Note about summer classes: Courses taken in May session and in the summer are generally longer in duration than courses in other semesters. Employees may request an exception to the above requirement from their supervisor. If approved by the supervisor, this exception must be noted on the tuition waiver form.

Note about leaves of absences: Occasionally, a course may require an extended leave of absence. This applies to such courses as practicums or internships. Tuition may be waived for such courses with the supervisor's and Dean/AVP approval of the leave of absence and if the employee returns to work following the completion of the course.

- 5.2.5 Courses taken for personal development and not related to an individual's assigned duties or the needs of the university should be taken outside of normal working hours. Exceptions may be granted at the supervisor's discretion provided an employee makes up missed work time or uses leave time.
- 5.2.6 Application for non-degree-seeking tuition waiver must be carefully reviewed and signed by the employee, his or her supervisor and the reviewer (normally the supervisor's supervisor). Emeritus faculty and staff who are not employed by the university must have their application for tuition waiver signed by a representative from the Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs.

- 5.2.7 Non-student wage employees, who are eligible for two courses and two labs per calendar year, must have the signature of their AVP or Dean on each Request for Waiver of Tuition as one of the three required signatures.
- 5.2.8 An employee who resigns from employment or is terminated for cause during the period in which a course is being taken will be responsible for the full payment of all tuition and associated fees, regardless of whether a tuition waiver has been approved for the course.
- 5.2.9 This waiver does not apply to courses offered thru Outreach Programs or other self-supporting programs, except as provided by university policy. Waivers can be used for employees who are fully accepted into the Adult Degree Program for courses that are self supporting.

5.3 IMPORTANT NOTE ABOUT ONLINE COURSES

The Board of Visitors has approved a special tuition rate for online courses.
If the *online* course *could* be taken in a standard classroom setting (at the regular tuition rate)

or

If the *online* course is *not required* for a particular degree program

the amount of tuition waived will *not* exceed the standard in-state per credit hour tuition rate.

Examples:

- An employee taking an *online* course that the employee has the option of taking in a classroom setting (at the standard tuition rate) will *not* have 100% of tuition waived. Instead, tuition will be waived up to the standard in-state rate.
- An employee taking an *online* course that is not a required element of the particular degree program will *not* have 100% of tuition waived. Instead, tuition will be waived up to the standard in-state rate.
- An employee taking an *online* course that is *only* offered online and is required for the completion of the degree will have full tuition waiver.
- An employee taking an *online* course that has been required by his or her supervisor will have full tuition waiver for that course.

6. PROCEDURES

Persons seeking a waiver of tuition for courses taken under this policy will:

1. Prepare the Waiver of Tuition Form, available from the Office of Human Resources at www.jmu.edu/humanresources/TWForm.doc
2. Non-degree seeking employees are classified as Special Students and must process a Special Student Application Form (located in the Schedule of Classes). The Special Student Application Form should be attached to the Waiver of Tuition Form.
3. The Office of Human Resources will affirm that the employee qualifies for tuition waiver and will then forward the processed Waiver of Tuition Form to the University Business

Office for final processing and approval of the waiver to be applied to employee account. Tuition waivers will only be processed after the university's semester census date. Employees receiving a balance due bill after submitting a tuition waiver will have their accounts adjusted by the amount of the tuition waiver for which they qualify.

4. Employees will be sent via campus mail a copy of waiver processed by HR to retain for their records.
5. Early processing of the Waiver of Tuition Form is strongly encouraged.
6. Taxable waivers are subject to state and federal withholding and social security and Medicare taxes and are based on the employee's taxable income. At the end of each semester, the University Business Office will provide Payroll Services a listing of employees that have received more than \$5,250.00 (the amount generally exempt from taxation under Internal Revenue Code Section 127). Payroll Services will collect the appropriate taxes from each employee at the end of the semester in which the employee exceeds the exempt limit for non-job related tuition waivers. Employee's W-2 will include taxable waivers.

7. RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of the employee and his/her supervisor to ensure that the requirements of the policy have been followed.

It is the responsibility of the employee to know and understand this policy regarding online courses. In the event that the employee is requesting tuition waiver for a course that does not qualify for full waiver under this policy, the *employee* will be responsible for payment of the balance of the tuition not waived.

8. SANCTIONS

Sanctions will be commensurate with the severity and/or frequency of the offense and may include termination of employment.

9. EXCLUSIONS

This policy does not apply to nor address classes or courses taken at an institution other than James Madison University. For information about such courses, see policy 1401 – Tuition Reimbursement.

Employees classified as 'affiliates' such as Aramark, Follett or Pitney Bowes employees are not eligible for tuition waiver.

Application fees, special course or departmental fees, and readmission fees are to be paid by the employee.

Under this policy, employees may not enroll in any class section if they displace regularly enrolled students. Class sizes will not be increased to allow for the enrollment of employees under this policy.

Former wage employees who are hired into full-time classified positions may waive the requirement in section 5.1 that calls for full-time classified employees to serve a six-month probationary period before having tuition waived as long as the wage employee worked at least 1000 hours in the 12 months prior to becoming a full-time classified employee.

10. INTERPRETATION

The authority to interpret this policy rests with the President, and is generally delegated to the Director of Human Resources.

Previous version: February, 2008

Approved by the President: February, 2008

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