



Applies to: Regular Staff with 75% FTE and greater appointments

POLICY

Issued: 02/06/1981

Edited: 04/14/2014

The Ohio State University is committed to recruiting and retaining world-class staff. The university encourages staff to pursue higher education to enrich their lives and to develop the highest quality workforce. To support individuals in their pursuit of higher education, the university allows staff to enroll in university courses and/or degree-granting programs and provides tuition assistance for up to ten credit hours of coursework per academic term for courses taken at Ohio State.

The employee's first responsibility is to fulfill their job obligations; supervisors are responsible to manage employee performance.

Staff may not enroll for more than ten hours per term without prior express approval as specified.

Policy Details

I. Credit Hour Maximum

- A. Regular staff with appointments of 75% FTE and greater may enroll for up to ten credit hours of coursework per academic term.
- B. The university will provide tuition assistance for up to ten credit hours of coursework per academic term, up to the [specified dollar limit per academic term](#).

II. Course Scheduling

- A. Scheduled class time and course work should not interfere with the performance of job duties and responsibilities. Job performance is determined by the supervisor.
- B. Requests to take courses during regularly-scheduled work hours must be approved in writing by the supervisor and employing unit head prior to registration.
- C. Supervisors are encouraged to support and provide opportunities for staff taking courses at the university. If courses occur during regularly scheduled work hours, supervisors are encouraged to use flexible work schedules when possible. Vacation, flextime, unpaid leave and/or compensatory time (for nonexempt staff) must be used for missed work hours.

PROCEDURE

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I. Approval Requirements

- A. For courses during regularly scheduled work hours, staff must talk with their supervisor to determine if a flexible work schedule is feasible. Supervisor and employing unit head approval is required for enrollment in



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courses during these times and must be indicated on the [Request for Course Enrollment During Regularly Scheduled Work Hours](#) form.

- B. Staff requesting a Program Exception must complete a [Program Exception Request](#) form. Supervisor and employing unit head approval is required for a Program Exception request. [Program Exception Request](#) forms must be received by the Office of Human Resources at least six weeks before the beginning of the academic term.
- C. Incomplete [Program Exception Request](#) forms will not be considered and will be returned to the applicant.

II. Exceptions to the Credit Hour Maximum Limit

- A. Staff may request a **Program Exception** to the credit hour maximum if the academic department has an established curriculum that requires all students to enroll in a specified number of hours per academic term in a lock-step fashion. Documentation is required from the academic department that indicates that the course load is a requirement that must be completed in a lock-step fashion. Academic programs that merely suggest but do not require a particular sequence or number of hours do not qualify for this exception. Programs that require significantly more than ten hours per term may not be approved. Staff must pay for any hours over ten per academic term.
- B. Program Exception requests must be approved by the supervisor and employing unit head.
- C. Separate from the Program Exception, staff are allowed two **No-Fault Exception** academic terms during which they may take more than ten credit hours of coursework. Staff using the No-Fault Exception will receive a letter acknowledging their use of this exception. There are significant penalties for taking more than ten credit hours beyond the two no-fault exceptions, as detailed in section VI.

III. Responsibility for Fees

- A. Staff are responsible for all applicable fees that are incurred as a result of dropping courses, regardless of the reason.
- B. Staff are responsible for all fees for courses over ten hours per academic term, in accordance with this policy.
- C. Staff are responsible for all fees other than general, instructional and non-resident fees up to the [specified dollar limit per academic term](#).

IV. Senior Administrative and Professional Appointees

Senior A&P appointees should also refer to [Rules of the University Faculty, Rule #3335-9-11](#).

V. Payroll Taxes

Payroll taxes assessed on tuition assistance will be withheld from employees' paychecks as required by federal law. Payroll taxes are withheld in full from the paycheck the month directly following when the tax liability accrues.

VI. Loss of Tuition Assistance and Corrective Action

- A. After using both of the two allowed No-Fault Exception terms, staff who do not have an approved Program Exception and who enroll in more than 10 credit hours per term will lose the tuition assistance benefit. The Office of Human Resources will verify the staff member's enrollment status as identified in the 14th day report generated by the Office of the University Registrar.
- B. In the term that the tuition benefit is lost, the tuition assistance will be reversed and the staff member is responsible for all fees incurred for that term of enrollment.



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- C. The staff member may also be subject to corrective action, up to and including a reduction in FTE and/or termination.

Responsibilities

Individual or Office	Responsibilities
Employee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Meet all job responsibilities and performance expectations associated with the position. B. Discuss options with the supervisor prior to scheduling courses if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Requesting to take courses during regularly scheduled work hours (address schedule options and if a flexible work schedule can be devised) or 2. Requesting a Program Exception to exceed the credit hour maximum. C. Request approval to take courses during regularly-scheduled work hours, by obtaining supervisor and employing unit head approval on the Request for Course Enrollment During Regularly Scheduled Work Hours form. D. Register for courses through the university's registration process. E. Request approval for a Program Exception by submitting a completed Program Exception Request form with all required documentation, including appropriate signatures, to the Office of Human Resources, Benefits, at least six weeks before the beginning of the term. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Requests for Program Exceptions must be received by OHR Benefits at least six weeks prior to the beginning of the academic term for which the exception is desired. Program Exception Request forms that are submitted by the deadline will be reviewed and responded to prior to the beginning of the academic term for which the exception is requested. Late requests will not be considered. 2. Prior to the 14th day of any quarter, drop the number of credit hours necessary to return to the maximum allowed if registered for credit hours exceeding the limit and the Program Exception is not approved. Staff are responsible for any fees associated with dropping courses. F. Track use of their two allowed No-Fault Exceptions; be aware of immediate loss of tuition benefit after both No-Fault Exceptions have been used. G. Pay for any credit hours over the 10 hour limit, whether a result of an approved Program Exception or a violation of this policy. H. Know the payroll tax implications of receiving tuition assistance used for enrollment in credit programs.
Supervisor and Employing Unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Support employees taking educational courses by using flexible work schedules in a reasonable manner, balancing the needs of the organization with those of the individual. B. Ensure the employee is meeting all performance expectations and that course work is not interfering with these expectations. C. Review and approve as appropriate Request for Course Enrollment During Regularly Scheduled Work Hours forms submitted by employees. D. Review Program Exception Request forms before employees submit them to the Office of Human Resources, Benefits and approve only in accordance with this policy, as appropriate. E. Maintain Request for Course Enrollment During Regularly Scheduled Work Hours and Program Exception Request forms in the employee's personnel file. F. Counsel employees to ensure compliance with this policy.
Office of Human Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Consult with employees and departments regarding this policy.



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	<p>B. Review and respond to Program Exception Request forms prior to the beginning of the quarter for which the exception is desired. Consult with individuals and units regarding these exceptions.</p> <p>C. Maintain copies of Program Exception Request forms in accordance with university records retention schedules.</p>
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Resources

[Policy 6.10](#) – Scheduling Work and Overtime Compensation

[Program Exception Request](#) form

[Request for Course Enrollment During Regularly Scheduled Work Hours](#) form

[Rules of the University Faculty, 3335-9-11](#)

[Faculty and Staff Tuition Assistance Program Information](#), Benefits Web site (hr.osu.edu/benefits/faculty-staff-tuition-assistance/)

Contacts

Subject	Office	Telephone	E-mail/URL
Policy clarification related to the benefit	Office of Human Resources, Benefits	614-292-1050	hr@osu.edu hr.osu.edu/benefits
Policy clarification related to corrective action	Office of Human Resources organization and Human Resource Consulting	614-292-2800	hr-elr@osu.edu hr.osu.edu/services/elr/
Faculty rules clarification	University Senate	614-292-2423	senate.osu.edu

History

- Issued: 02/06/1981
- Revised: 07/25/1994
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- Revised: 01/11/2005
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- Revised: 07/01/2008
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