Section 3 Human Resources Department Subject 3.5 Benefits **Policy 3.5.1 Tuition Reimbursement for College Credit Coursework**	09/01/95 -Originated 01/08/10 -Reviewed w/ changes -Reviewed w/o changes Human Resources -Author

Tuition Reimbursement for College Credit Coursework

Definitions

Good Standing – employee's most recent performance evaluation "meets standard" and no disciplinary actions greater than written warning have occurred since last evaluation.

Policy

The University of Texas Medical Branch, in compliance with applicable federal laws and regulations, strives to maintain an environment free from discrimination against individuals on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, disability, sexual orientation, genetic information, or veteran status.

This policy is designed to 1) foster the professional growth and development of employees; 2) encourage them to obtain the skills, knowledge, and abilities that may improve their opportunity for career advancement; and 3) promote institutional consistency regarding the administration of tuition reimbursement for college credits. Subject to an annual review of the availability of funds, tuition reimbursement will be provided for eligible employees in accordance with the information described in this document.

Employee Eligibility

To be eligible for tuition reimbursement, the employee must:

1. work consistently (30 hours or more per week), and have completed six months of employment and employee must be in good standing prior to the beginning of class(es) for which registration is sought.
2. be pursuing a graduate or undergraduate degree that directly relates to the employee's existing job or career path and will qualify the employee as a candidate for jobs requiring the degree training on completion of schooling; or an individual job-related credit course outside of a degree program.
3. sign a formal agreement (the UTMB *Tuition Reimbursement Agreement*), in which the employee is to remain in the employment of UTMB for a period of time after the completion of each semester that is proportionate to the period of time the employee has received financial assistance, or to repay the amount of money if the individual fails to stay in the employment of UTMB for the period of time equal to the number of semester length for which the employee was reimbursed.

Employee Eligibility, continued

4. The employee must complete the forms, obtain pre-approval from their supervisor and Human Resources using the UTMB *Request for Tuition Reimbursement* form and the UTMB *Tuition Reimbursement Agreement.* The employee must complete the forms, have their supervisor approve them and submit for signature to Human Resources **prior to the beginning** of class(es) or degree program.

Documentation

Employees are accountable for providing documentation of the successful completion of all classes reimbursed through this policy to Finance – Payroll within 30 days of the completion of the semester. Proof of grades, a completed, pre-approved UTMB *Request for Tuition Reimbursement* form and UTMB *Tuition Reimbursement Agreement* must be submitted for reimbursement to occur.

Guidelines for Reimbursement

1. Employees may apply one time with a complete degree program; or for an individual job-related class. However, if there are any changes to the degree program employees must resubmit the application.
2. Courses eligible for reimbursement (**a maximum of $1,350 per fiscal year**) must be for college credit(s) from a regionally-accredited college or university. This includes classroom and on-line courses.
3. The component of state tuition rate set by the Legislature for public 4-year colleges and universities multiplied by two is the maximum rate for reimbursement for courses taken at private colleges and universities. There are two components, state tuition and designated tuition and the legislature establishes the amount for state tuition on a biennial basis. An employee receiving external funding from another entity (e.g., scholarships, GI Bill, other organizations) may only submit expenses not covered by the external-funding agent. Any exception to this policy must be approved in advance by the President or designee and will be paid outside of the Institutional Tuition Reimbursement Funds.

Reimbursable/

Reimbursable expenses include:

1. Tuition

Non-Reimbursable Expenses

2. Related Fees (e.g., building use fee, technology fee, student services, health and insurance fees for students in health-related studies, registration fee, etc.)

Reimbursable/ Non-Reimbursable Expenses, continued

Non-reimbursable expenses include:

1. Parking costs
2. Late fees or Financing Fees
3. Books
4. Incidental items -- including those required by the instructor (e.g., calculators, book bags, etc.)
5. Travel expenses

Criteria for Reimbursement

Reimbursement may be obtained upon completion of the course and is subject to the following:

1. Employees must maintain satisfactory grade(s) of "C" or better for undergraduate or a "B" or better for graduate courses to be eligible to receive reimbursement. In cases where the grading system is Pass/Fail, Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory, etc., the employee must receive the grade that gives credit for the course.
2. Reimbursement for courses taken more than once will not be provided, except for thesis or dissertation courses.

Important Note Regarding Taxation

All individuals are required to complete and comply with all applicable federal, state, and UTMB rules and regulations. This includes review of taxation issues addressed by the Internal Revenue Code.

Work Scheduling to Accommodate Class Time

Education initiated by an employee and covered by this policy should be pursued outside normal working hours. In instances where classes are only available during normal working hours, supervisors are encouraged to provide flexible work schedules and appropriate use of paid leave (e.g., vacation, compensatory time, etc.). However, any such work scheduling to accommodate class time is subject to supervisory approval in advance of registration, and shall be reviewed every semester.