Policy

1. **Purpose**: Tuition Reimbursement for employee requested coursework or training shall be governed by this policy and University of Wisconsin System financial administration policy Educational Assistance for Faculty and Staff (#G25).

2. **Eligibility**: Faculty, Academic Staff or Limited Appointees must have a half time or greater permanent appointment and non-represented classified employees must have a permanent appointment of 1040 hours or more annually to be eligible for tuition reimbursement. Limited term employees, employees in training and student help are not eligible.

3. **Not included within this policy**:
   a. Employer required or requested training
   b. Tuition reimbursement or coursework negotiated as part of an employment contract
   c. Remedial training

4. **Definitions**:
   a. Qualifying coursework – that which provides skill or knowledge for continuing or improved performance in current position or for a job or career related courses.
   b. Job related – credit and noncredit, undergraduate or graduate level noncredit or training that is required by the University, or by law or regulations, to maintain salary, status or current position (if the requirements serve a business purpose of the University), or taken to maintain or improve skills required in the employee’s present work.
   c. Career related – undergraduate and graduate level courses and professional development courses which will qualify an employee for advancement. Courses for personal enrichment do not qualify.

5. **Exclusions**:
   a. CLEP exam costs will not be reimbursed
   b. Cost of auditing a class will not be reimbursed
   c. Textbooks will not be reimbursed
   d. Books, supplies, and travel costs will not be reimbursed
   e. Segregated fees will not be reimbursed

6. **Policy**: It is the policy of the University of Wisconsin-River Falls Campus (“Campus”) to promote continuing education of employees. Employees may be reimbursed for authorized education and training within the constraints listed in this policy and within budget constraints.

   a. Management’s decision to authorize educational assistance should be based on the determination that successful completion of the course will be beneficial to both the Campus and the employee in terms of increased knowledge, abilities, and skills. The definition of successful completion for an undergraduate course is 2.000 GPA or greater, and for a graduate course it is 3.000 GPA or greater. Assistance may be denied in cases where management determines that neither the course nor the degree pursued is of sufficient benefit to the Campus. Examples of courses which are deemed to benefit both the Campus and the employee include:
i. Courses which provide knowledge and skills directly related to maintaining or improving current job skills;
ii. Courses mandated by law or regulation in order for the employee to retain the job;
iii. Courses directly related to the profession in which the employee is currently working, current classification, or classification series; and
iv. Courses which provide for career development within the Campus, including those which are a necessary elective for completion of such degree.

b. **Time Off:** Ordinarily coursework will be taken on the employee’s own time. However, proportional compensatory time may be scheduled with prior approval provided normal services of the employing department are not disrupted or impaired.

7. **Funding:** An allocation for tuition reimbursement will be made each fiscal year. All requests using this process will be funded through central funds. Individual departments are not allowed to fund additional requests outside of the central funds.

8. Reimbursement may be adjusted year to year depending on budget constraints:
   a. On Campus Undergraduate Coursework - tuition may be reimbursed up to 75% of the tuition rate.
   b. On Campus Graduate Coursework – tuition may be reimbursed up to 75% of the tuition rate.
   c. Off Campus Undergraduate Coursework – tuition may be reimbursed up to 50% of the undergraduate WI resident tuition rate at UW River Falls or 50% of the cost of the tuition at the off campus site, whichever is less.
   d. Off Campus Graduate Coursework – tuition may be reimbursed up to 50% of the graduate WI resident tuition rate at UW River Falls or 50% of the cost of the tuition at the off campus site, whichever is less.
   e. Off Campus Doctoral Coursework – tuition may be reimbursed up to 50% of the doctoral WI resident tuition rate at UW Madison or 50% of the cost of the tuition at the off campus site, whichever is less.
   f. Courses other than undergraduate, graduate, or doctoral coursework – tuition may be reimbursed up to 50% of the cost of the tuition.

9. **Amount of Coursework Permitted:** Employees may seek reimbursement for one course with a maximum of five credits in two semesters (or equivalent) within any academic year.

10. **Coursework/Training Sources:** Coursework may be taken at any state accredited public or private higher education institution or WTCS district institution. Coursework at UW River Falls is encouraged.

11. Tuition reimbursements authorized by the Chancellor shall be reimbursed only upon successful completion of the course and if the employee is still employed at UW River Falls. If an employee changes positions within the UW System prior to completion of an authorized course, he or she must negotiate reimbursement with the new campus. A copy of the completed request for authorization to reimburse employee’s tuition form, a fee receipt or other satisfactory evidence of having paid reimbursable tuition, evidence of successful completion of the coursework or training (grade report or certification of completion) must be submitted when requesting reimbursement.

12. **Taxability of reimbursements:** The taxability of the reimbursement is subject to the existing provisions of the Internal Revenue Code. Employees are advised to obtain tax counsel as to the reportability and deductibility of educational expense reimbursements.
Authority
The UW-River Falls Chancellor issues this policy in accordance with the Administrative Policy process.

The VCBF is responsible for the administration of this policy. To request an exception to this policy, mailto: administrative-policy@uwrf.edu.

Sanctions and Appeals Process
Failure to adhere to the provisions of this policy may result in appropriate disciplinary action as provided under existing procedures applicable to students, faculty, and staff, and/or civil or criminal prosecution.

Procedure
1. Approval Process
   a. Prior to commencement of any coursework, the employee shall submit a letter and completed request for authorization to reimburse employee’s tuition to his/her supervisor seeking advanced authorization for enrollment in job or career-related classes. The letter must contain an outline of the educational program the employee is pursuing.
   b. If the request is approved by the supervisor, the request shall be submitted to a member of cabinet or College Dean for approval.
   c. If the request is approved by a member of cabinet or College Dean, the request shall be submitted to the Vice Chancellor for Business and Finance for review.
   d. After the request is reviewed by the Vice Chancellor for Business and Finance, the request shall be submitted to the Chancellor. The request must be received and approved by the Chancellor at least one week prior to registration.

Tuition Reimbursement Form

University Responsibilities
Vice Chancellor for Business and Finance

Contact
To direct questions about this policy, mailto: administrative-policy@uwrf.edu.