

Recommendation to Revise Policy No. IV-7 as it Relates to the Tuition Reimbursement Benefit

It is hereby resolved by the Staff Advisory Council of Case Western Reserve University that the Council recommends that the Tuition Reimbursement benefit detailed in HR Policy IV-7 be revised to increase the annual dollar amount available to eligible faculty and staff in order to encourage and facilitate an increased participation in continuing higher education and professional development and to enable timely completion of employees' courses of study.

Whereas

Case Western Reserve University offers a Tuition Reimbursement benefit for eligible employees that is currently limited to a maximum \$2,500.00 of eligible tuition per fiscal year (adjusted January 2013 and effective July 1, 2014); and

The Tuition Reimbursement and Tuition Waiver benefits are limited to six credit hours per fall and spring semester, three credit hours per summer semester; and

The current Tuition Reimbursement benefit amount is only sufficient to fully cover the allotted number of credit hours for courses at some 2-year institutions which adversely impacts the timely completion of degrees for those employees pursuing Bachelor's, Master's or Doctoral degrees at institutions other than CWRU; and

Employees whose educational advancement and progress towards degree completion are limited may also 1) be limited in the scope of their service to the University, 2) be limited in their perceived value to the University as individuals, 3) suffer disparate impact on their ability to advance their career at the University, and 4) suffer disparate impact on their ability to leverage tuition benefits should their position not permit release during work hours for classes at CWRU; and

CWRU's new Strategic Plan restates the University's commitment to equity and that the University will "create a university-wide culture and infrastructure that inspires trust, and fosters personal and professional development" and will "invest in the professional development ... of staff", in part, by finding "ways to enhance their influence and development",

Be it Resolved

That we, the members of the Staff Advisory Council of Case Western Reserve University, hereby recommend the following:

- A revision to HR Policy IV-7 which increases the amount of the available Tuition Reimbursement benefit to up to \$3,500.00 per year effective July 1, 2015, for

employees pursuing their degree in any degree category (Associate's, Bachelor's, Master's, or Doctoral); and

- A revision to HR Policy IV-7 which provides an option to increase the available amount of the Tuition Reimbursement benefit to up to \$7,500.00 per year effective July 1, 2015, for employees pursuing their first degree in at any level (Associate's, Bachelor's, Master's, or Doctoral), with the additional condition that the individual remain an employee of the University for no less than two (2) years following their application for the increased benefit and degree completion if the employee has elected to request the higher Tuition Reimbursement amount.
- Should the employee resign from the University within two (2) years of using more than \$3,500.00 per year as Tuition Reimbursement benefit, the employee shall reimburse to the University any amount over \$3,500.00. Should the employee be released from employment within two (2) years of using more than \$3,500.00 per year as Tuition Reimbursement benefit the University shall forgo any reimbursement obligation by the employee.

Respectfully submitted,
Staff Advisory Council, Case Western Reserve University
Barb Juknialis, Chair & James Nauer, Vice-Chair

Fringe Benefits Committee, Staff Advisory Council
Cheryl King, Chair

Policy Committee, Staff Advisory Council
Johnny Sams & Karen Romoser, Co-Chairs