

TUITION ASSISTANCE

Brian's Communication/February 2015: Faculty will be offered the same level of tuition reimbursement, but reimbursement will be approved only for courses that are needed for the Faculty Quality Assurance System and/or the Higher Learning Commission. There will be no reimbursement for education for other purposes by faculty, administration, or support staff. This decision was initially made by the Executive Council during our development of the 2015-2016 budget, discussed during the ESSC meeting on April 16, 2015, and affirmed in our Executive Council meeting on Tuesday, April 28, when we discussed revisions to the Employee Handbook.

Course Reimbursement/Salary Advancement Clarification for AY16:

- 1) Faculty taking courses to meet accreditation, Faculty Quality Assurance System (FQAS) requirements, or as part of a degree program tied to the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), are eligible for tuition assistance up to 9 credits per fiscal year @ \$130.00 per credit.
 - Includes faculty taking courses to meet HLC or specialized/program accreditation.
- 2) A course qualifies for tuition support and advancement on the faculty salary schedule only if the course (*and level of course*) meets accreditation (and FQAS*) requirements, related to the faculty's member's field of instruction (or required degree program), AND is approved by the Dean. Courses taken for personal interest and those not required or requested by BTC do not qualify for tuition assistance or movement on the salary schedule.

**The FQAS does not require that courses be taken for credit. A course taken only to satisfy an FQAS competency does not qualify for tuition assistance or salary advancement. Exception:*

- *If the course is simultaneously needed for accreditation or a degree program and counts for FQAS, it is eligible for tuition reimbursement and salary advancement. (E.G. Someone earning a Bachelors for HLC requirements takes a course that "counts" for WTCS)*
 - *If a full-time instructor is not able to complete the FQAS competencies through BTC offerings, tuition assistance can be used to cover the registration expense for the online WTCS courses (approximately \$125) and the Certification Consortium opportunities (approximately \$45)*
- 3) Ongoing Professional Development: Faculty taking credits to maintain their Ongoing Professional Development (formerly 5-Year Certification) status required under FQAS will not be eligible for tuition assistance or salary advancement unless the course (*and level of course*) "counts" toward:
 - Program accreditation requirements;
 - Is part of a degree program tied to HLC; and/or
 - Meets the FQAS currency requirement and will advance the instructor in the discipline being taught.
 - 4) PRIOR Approval is required for tuition assistance and for salary advancement: Dean and Vice President of Learning. Copies of the final approval form should be sent to the faculty member and HR (to be kept in the personnel file). HR will notify payroll of any advancement on the salary schedule.

Salary Advancement:

- Faculty will advance according to the former guidelines (every 6 credits) if the Dean and Vice President of Learning approves of the course, as long as the current salary schedule remains in place and the course meets the criteria detailed above. If the official transcript is received prior to the last pay period in October, adjustments will be made back to the start of the fall semester; if the official transcript is received prior to the last pay period in March, adjustments will be made back to the start of the spring semester.
- Once the faculty member gets approval from the Dean and Vice Present of Learning, HR will notify payroll that an adjustment needs to be made