A. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish the requirements for participation in the Old Dominion University tuition assistance program for eligible Old Dominion University employees, their spouses and legal dependents.

B. AUTHORITY

Virginia Code Section 23.1-1301, as amended, grants authority to the Board of Visitors to make rules and policies concerning institution. Section 6.01(a)(6) of the Board of Visitors Bylaws grants authority to the President to implement the policies and procedures of the Board relating to University operations.

Virginia Department of Human Resource Management Policy 5.10 - Educational Assistance

C. DEFINITIONS

Academic Year – In sequence, the fall and spring semesters and summer semester (sessions).

Administrative and Professional (AP) Faculty – Employees who perform work directly related to the management of the educational and general activities of the institution, department or subdivision or whose professional positions serve the educational, research, athletic, medical, student affairs, and development functions or activities of the institution.

Annual Income Limit – Maximum salary of employees who are allowed to participate in the tuition assistance program.

Career Development – Courses taken leading towards a degree that will increase an employee’s opportunity for advancement within Old Dominion University.

Classified Employee – A salaried employee whose terms and conditions of employment are subject to the Virginia Personnel Act, Code of Virginia Section 2.2-2900 et seq., as amended, and who is employed in a classified position.

Creditable Compensation – The annual salary used to determine Old Dominion University’s contributions to the employee’s retirement with the Virginia Retirement System or Optional Retirement Plan.
Distance Learning Employees – Full-time classified employees, full-time teaching and research faculty, full-time administrative and professional (AP) faculty, part-time classified employees, part-time administrative and professional (AP) faculty, and wage (non-student) distance learning employees

Eligible Course Work – Higher education courses for which a letter grade is assigned and college or university credit hours are earned.

Eligible Employee – Full-time classified employees, full-time teaching and research faculty and full-time administrative and professional (AP) faculty who have completed one year of full-time service with Old Dominion University at the time of the tuition assistance application deadline and whose annual incomes do not exceed the annual income limit. Part-time classified, AP faculty and wage (non-student) employees who have completed three years of continuous service with Old Dominion University at the time of the tuition assistance application deadline and whose annual incomes do not exceed the annual income limit.

Eligible Family Members – The legally married spouse (as defined in the Code of Virginia) and legal dependents (as defined by the IRS) of eligible classified, faculty and AP faculty employees. Family members of wage and part-time faculty classified employees are not eligible.

Job-related – Courses that are directly related to the enhancement of knowledge and skills associated with an employee’s duties at Old Dominion University.

Participant – The employee, spouse or legal dependent receiving tuition assistance.

Teaching and Research Faculty – Employees whose work assignments primarily involve instruction, research, and scholarly activities, and who hold academic rank/titles (with departmental designation) of professor, associate professor, assistant professor, senior lecturer, lecturer, instructor of the equivalent of any of these academic units.

Tuition Assistance – Payment of tuition only, per-credit-hour, not to exceed the Old Dominion University in-state tuition rate. Classified employees may receive tuition assistance for six credit hours in the fall semester, six credit hours in the spring semester and three credit hours in the summer semester/sessions. Faculty, AP faculty, part-time classified and wage employees may receive tuition assistance for three credit hours in the fall semester, three credit hours in the spring semester and three credit hours in the summer semester/sessions. Eligible family members may receive tuition assistance for six credit hours in the fall semester and six credit hours in the spring semester. All tuition assistance provided is contingent upon availability of funding. In the event of limited funding, tuition assistance provided shall be based on the employee’s service seniority at Old Dominion University.

Tuition Deferment – Payment of tuition for eligible course work by the Department of Human Resources for participants in the tuition assistance program, with funds established by the program for this purpose, at the beginning of the semester in which the course is being taken.

Wage Employee – A non-salaried employee who receives pay for hours worked and is not covered by the provisions of the Virginia Personnel Act. (Wage employees are sometimes referred to as hourly employees.)

D. SCOPE
This policy applies to all eligible employees of Old Dominion University and their eligible family members as defined above.

E. POLICY STATEMENT

Old Dominion University is committed to making affordable higher education available to eligible employees and their family members by providing them with opportunities to increase their education, job skills and career development through a tuition assistance program. Funding for employee participation in the tuition assistance program is derived from Commonwealth sources and from local sources for eligible family members. As a general rule, tuition assistance is provided for tuition payments that would be made to Old Dominion University.

The annual income limit for tuition assistance eligibility shall be established by the President. The limit may be reviewed and changed at the discretion of the President. The limit shall be announced prior to each semester’s application deadline by the Vice President for Human Resources.

All tuition assistance provided is contingent upon availability of funding. In the event of limited funding, tuition assistance provided shall be based on the employee’s service seniority at Old Dominion University.

An employee’s participation in the tuition assistance program is based upon his or her creditable compensation. Any action that causes an employee’s creditable annual compensation to exceed the annual income limit for eligibility (e.g., change from a 10- to 12-month faculty contract, negotiation of an increase due to a competitive offer, or faculty participation in the Office of Academic Affairs salary conversion program) will make the employee, his/her spouse and legal dependent(s) ineligible for participation in the tuition assistance program.

Tuition assistance must be job-related or for career development. Tuition assistance shall not be provided for in-service training, continuing education, computer software courses, instruction for standardized test preparation (SAT, GMAT, GRE etc.) or courses for professional licensure, certification or review (CPA, SHRM, PE etc.).

Employees approved for tuition assistance agree to continue employment at Old Dominion University for a minimum of one year following the completion of the last semester in which tuition assistance was provided. If the conditions of this agreement are not met, the tuition assistance must be repaid.

In addition to the requirements of this policy, tuition assistance program participants shall be responsible for complying with the procedures for students established by academic and administrative units of the University.

Classified and Wage Employees

Classified employees may receive tuition assistance for up to six credit hours in the fall semester, six credit hours in the spring semester, and three credit hours in the summer semester/sessions. Wage employees may receive tuition assistance for up to three credit hours in the fall semester,
three credit hours in the spring semester, and three credit hours in the summer semester/sessions.

Participation in the tuition assistance program by classified and wage employees for course work during the employee’s scheduled working hours is subject to approval of the employee’s supervisor. Classified employees may be granted no more than three hours per week of release time, or may be granted permission to use annual, compensatory, overtime or VSDP personal leave, in order to participate in the tuition assistance program during scheduled working hours. At the supervisor’s discretion, classified and wage employees may be permitted to work adjusted or flexible work hours (i.e. reporting to work early or leaving work late) to cover only that time absent from work to attend class.

Classified and wage employees may receive tuition assistance for job-related and career development courses offered at a Virginia community college or other four-year Virginia public college or university when the course or degree sought is not available at Old Dominion University. If a participant is taking course work at another college or university, the policies of Old Dominion University shall take precedence, when applicable.

Faculty and AP Faculty

Faculty and AP faculty may receive tuition assistance for three credit hours in the fall semester, three credit hours in the spring semester, and three credit hours in the summer semester/sessions. Tuition assistance is available only for credit courses taken at Old Dominion University.

Distance Learning Employees

In certain circumstances, Distance Learning employees may receive tuition assistance for courses at a college or university other than Old Dominion University when the course(s) are not offered by Old Dominion University (which includes ODU courses offered in online or other remote formats). The course work must be at a Virginia public college or university. Distance Learning site employees outside of Virginia may receive tuition assistance for course work at any state college or university for courses that are not offered by Old Dominion University (which includes ODU courses offered in online or other remote formats). If a participant is taking course work at another college or university, the policies of Old Dominion University shall take precedence, when applicable.

Eligible Family Members

Eligible family members of classified employees, faculty and AP faculty may receive tuition assistance for six credit hours in the fall semester and six credit hours in the spring semester. In order to receive tuition assistance, eligible family members must meet Satisfactory Academic Progress, as defined in the Satisfactory Academic Progress for Financial Aid Eligibility policy. Family members of wage and part-time classified employees are not eligible.

If an eligible family member of an eligible employee is also an employee, then he/she must be eligible and participate in the program as an employee. Legal dependents of two eligible Old Dominion University employees may apply for and receive tuition assistance as the dependent of only one eligible employee.
In accordance with current Internal Revenue Service regulations, graduate tuition assistance provided for eligible family members is considered a non-cash taxable fringe benefit to the employee.

Tuition assistance for eligible family members is available only for credit courses taken at Old Dominion University.

F. PROCEDURES

Participants must be registered for the course(s) for which tuition assistance is requested at the time of application. Completed applications for tuition assistance, including proof of registration, are due to the Department of Human Resources no later than the application deadline. Applications must specify the course(s) for which tuition assistance is requested. Changes to course(s) (withdrawal, drop and/or add) specified on the application must be made prior to the deadlines established by the University Registrar and will not be permitted after these deadlines.

Tuition assistance is provided through tuition deferment.

Employees shall be responsible for repayment of tuition assistance provided to them or their eligible family members in the event of unsuccessful course completion, course withdrawal, adding or dropping the course after the University Registrar’s established deadline, or failure to clear an Incomplete (I or II) by the deadline established by the University’s Registrar. The participant must receive a grade of C minus or better for an undergraduate course, or a B minus or better for a graduate course, by the date prescribed by the Old Dominion University Registrar, in order to be deemed as having achieved successful course completion under this program.

Separation of employment before the completion of the semester or session for which tuition assistance is provided shall require repayment of the tuition assistance. If an employee must repay tuition, repayment may be made by any means accepted by the University’s Office of Finance. Any late or collection fees assessed by the Office of Finance will be the responsibility of the employee.

Requests for exceptions to this policy shall be submitted, in writing, to the Benefits Manager.

For more details, refer to Old Dominion University Department of Human Resources Tuition Assistance Procedures and Applications.

G. RETENTION

Records are retained for three years and then destroyed in compliance with the Commonwealth’s Records Retention and Disposition Schedule (General Schedule 103, Series 100481).

H. RESPONSIBLE OFFICER

Human Resources Benefits Manager

I. RELATED INFORMATION

Virginia Department of Human Resource Management Leave Policies and Procedures
Old Dominion University Leave Policies and Procedures
POLICY HISTORY
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Policy Formulation Committee (PFC) & Responsible Officer Approval to Proceed:

/s/ Brenda M. Johnson                     December 14, 2016
Responsible Officer

Policy Review Committee (PRC) Approval to Proceed:

/s/ Donna W. Meeks                         October 25, 2016
Chair, Policy Review Committee (PRC)

Executive Policy Review Committee (EPRC) Approval to Proceed:

/s/ September Sanderlin                   December 14, 2016
Responsible Oversight Executive

University Counsel Approval to Proceed:

/s/ R. Earl Nance                         December 15, 2016
University Counsel

Presidential Approval:

/s/ John R. Broderick                    December 16, 2016
President

Policy Revision Dates: December 1, 1988; May 1, 2002; January 31, 2003; July 1, 2004;
July 1, 2008; June 24, 2010; June 21, 2012; December 16, 2016

Scheduled Review Date: December 16, 2021