

TUITION REIMBURSEMENT (POLICY & PROCEDURES)

Oglala Lakota College encourages the upgrading of its faculty through its professional development practices. Development and upgrading of faculty skills and knowledge benefit not only the individual faculty member but also OLC students and the OLC community at large. The faculty tuition reimbursement program exists for the sole purpose of developing faculty by enabling them to pursue advanced degrees in their chosen field of study. To this end, the College has made available funds through its Tuition Assistance Fund and through individual grants that it has received which have been structured to support faculty pursuing advanced degrees. The Tuition Reimbursement Policy and Procedures have been developed to insure fair and equitable consideration of requests for tuition reimbursement funds and to provide guidance to faculty who wish to apply for tuition reimbursement funds.

Conditions:

1. The applicant must be a full-time employee of Oglala Lakota College both at the time of application for funds and at the time reimbursement would normally be made.
2. The goals and outcomes of the applicant's course of study must specifically align with the applicant's Department and/or the College's strategic plan and objectives.
3. Reimbursement will be given only for pre-approved courses.
4. Reimbursement is for tuition and associated fees only.
5. Associated fees include but are not limited to laboratory fees, technology fees, and other institutional fees required of all students enrolled in the applicant's course of study. Books, athletic fees, travel fees, parking fees, copy fees, board, room, etc. are excluded under this policy. However, in the event that reimbursement funds are dispersed from grant funding sources, the provisions contained in the grant shall govern fee reimbursement.
6. Funds are awarded only to applicants enrolled in courses offered as part of a graduate degree program at a post-secondary institution that is recognized as a college and accredited by a nationally recognized regional accrediting agency.
7. Recipients of tuition reimbursement funds must sign an employment agreement with the college agreeing to continued work as a fulltime employee. The length of required service shall be as based on the amount of tuition reimbursement received in accordance with the following schedule:

Funding Amount	Service Required
\$500.00 to \$2,000.00	1 academic year
\$2,001.00 to \$4,000.00	2 academic years
\$4,001.00 and up	3 academic years

Note: Quarter hours /Points will be converted to semester hour equivalents for the purpose of determining service requirement.

8. Should the employee chose to leave the employment of the college before the service requirement has been met the employee agrees to repay the college for the tuition reimbursement he/she has received.

Funding:

The Tuition Reimbursement Fund is a limited fund. The College identifies an annual amount for faculty tuition reimbursement and this amount is made available to applicants during the course of the academic year. From year to year the amount of reimbursement funds may be adjusted and there is no guarantee that funding will be available to support multi-year degree programs of study. In the event that program funding is diminished, funding priority will be given to faculty already being funded. In that event, those faculty members nearest to completion of their degree programs of study will be given funding priority over those just beginning their programs.

Procedures

Initial Application for Reimbursement

1. Faculty requesting tuition reimbursement funds must apply to the Faculty Development Committee prior to initiating their course of study.
2. The initial application must contain the following information
 - a. The name of the college or university the faculty member will be enrolled at.
 - b. The degree that the faculty member will be pursuing.
 - c. A proposed course of study containing a list of classes the student anticipates she/he will be enrolled in.
 - d. The subject or a description of the student's thesis or dissertation if known,
 - e. A schedule of the tuition and associated fees charged by the college or university.
 - f. The list of classes the faculty member will be taking during the initial semester of her/his degree program and actual tuition reimbursement she/he will be requesting for the first semester of classes.
3. A letter of support from the faculty member's department chairman must accompany the initial application.
4. The Faculty Development Committee will review the applicant's application and approve or disapprove the faculty member's application.
5. Notification of the committee's decision will be given to the applicant, the applicant's department chairman, and the Vice President for Instruction. If the application is denied, the reason for denial will be given in the notification.

Subsequent Applications for Reimbursement.

After the general plan of study has been approved, the applicant must continue to apply to the faculty development committee each semester for tuition reimbursement. This is required so that the committee can insure that dedicated funds are not over spent.

1. Subsequent applications must be submitted two months prior to the start of classes.
2. Subsequent applications must list the classes the applicant will be taking and the actual tuition charges for those classes.
3. The Faculty Development Committee must be notified of changes or updates to the applicant's program of study.
4. The faculty member will be notified prior to the start of classes if the request for tuition reimbursement has been denied.

Reimbursement

1. Tuition reimbursement will occur after the applicant has successfully completed an approved class or classes.
2. The applicant must submit a receipt from the college or university showing the class(es) the applicant enrolled in and the amount paid by the applicant for the class(es).

3. The applicant must submit proof of satisfactory completion of the class(es). Proof may consist of a copy of an official grade notification form from the college or university, unofficial transcript that list the class and grade for which the applicant is requesting reimbursement, or other proof acceptable to the committee.
4. Once proof of successful completion of approved classes has been received, the committee will notify the business office and reimbursement will be made by the business office to the to the applicant in conformance with business office policy.

Criteria for Decisions.

The following will be considered when evaluating initial and subsequent requests for tuition reimbursement funds:

1. The proposed plan of study must be consistent with the College and Department's strategic direction and true to the College and Department's mission.
2. The proposed plan of study must be directly related to the employee's current position, program, department, or to a related position to which the College has indicated its intension to assign the employee.
3. Applicants progress toward achieving her/his degree.
4. Availability of Funds.
5. Refusal to sign employment agreement.

I have read and agreed to abide by the conditions laid out in this policy. I am aware that by accepting tuition reimbursement I am committing to remain at Oglala Lakota College in accordance with Item Number 7 of the "Conditions" section of this document.

Name

Date