



University of Pittsburgh Education Benefit Policy Committee Charter

I. Preamble

This body is called the Education Benefit Policy Committee (Committee). It is authorized by the Chancellor and will serve at the Chancellor's discretion. The Chancellor has authorized the Vice Chancellor of Human Resources (VC-HR) to direct the operations of this Committee, consistent with the terms of this Charter. This Charter outlines the purpose, relevant background, scope, responsibilities, composition, and operations of the Committee, as well as the review process for any proposals generated by this Committee.

This document should be read in conjunction with Policy 01-01-01, Establishing University Policies, and all other applicable University policies, protocols, and procedures.

II. Purpose

The Committee is created for the purpose of proposing a new University Policy (or Policies) on education benefits, as well as documents that will support implementation, which will govern eligibility for education benefits offered by the University to staff, faculty, spouses, domestic partners, and dependents.

III. Background

In consultation with the Office of Policy Development and Management (Policy Office), and with the support from the Vice Chancellor of Human Resources (VC HR), the Benefits Department has requested that the University revise its current policies that govern the availability of education benefits to University staff and faculty. The Policy Office has discussed this proposal with University staff, including in the Controller's Office and the Benefits Department, and there is broad support for this effort.

Currently, this topic is governed by four University Policies, which are:

- Employee/Spouse/Dependent Scholarships for Faculty (02-07-01); Dated March 2011.
- Employee/Spouse/Dependent Scholarships Staff (07-11-01); Dated July 1994.
- Effect of Separation on Eligibility for Faculty Scholarship (02-07-02); Dated July 1994.
- Effect of Separation on Eligibility for Tuition Benefits (07-11-02); Dated July 1994.

As noted above these policies have not been updated in several years and in some cases over two decades. Reviewing these policies together provides an opportunity to comprehensively address the way the University administers this benefit, including examining whether these policies could be combined or streamlined for ease of use.

The scope of the intended policy (or policies) is University-wide as the availability of the benefit is relevant to faculty, staff, and students. For instance, the Benefits Department has flagged that due to the age of the policies there are some potential inequities between the faculty and staff requirements related to the timing and eligibility. Furthermore, updating these policies could help to improve the way in which the University complies with certain reporting requirements. For instance, the Pennsylvania's Public School Code of 1949 requires, among other things, the University of Pittsburgh and other state related universities submit the University's tuition remission policies to the state. Departments in separate Responsibility Centers have requested an update to the tuition remission policies in order to more effectively comply with this requirement.

IV. Scope and Authority

The Committee will recommend a new University Policy (or Policies), and supplemental documents (e.g., guidelines and procedures), which will govern the education benefits offered by the University. In doing so, the Committee's deliberations must address the following topics:

- **Consistency.** Ensure consistency, where possible, between faculty and staff eligibility for education benefits.
- **Compliance.** Establish procedures and guidelines that comply with relevant federal/state/local laws (e.g., Public School Code of 1949).
- **Update.** Address and update relevant procedures and standards associated with using the University education benefit.
- **Clarity.** Provide clarity for Employees, spouses, domestic partners, and dependents who use the education benefit.
- **Cost.** Consider the cost of the education benefit given potential changes to eligibility.

V. Responsibilities

As provided above, the Committee is created to propose a new University Policy (or Policies), and its supplemental documents (e.g., guidelines and procedures), on education benefits. To perform this function, the Committee has the responsibility to:

- Review and consider current University practices and processes related to education benefits.
- Research and discuss best practices for education benefits, including a benchmarking of peer universities' respective policies.
- Incorporate or address applicable federal/state/local laws and regulations in the proposed Policy (or Policies) and associated procedure.

- Establish a formal Policy (or Policies) governing education benefits that, to the extent possible; provides criteria for education benefit eligibility and documents processes to apply for the education benefit.
- Consult with faculty and staff during the drafting stage(s) of the Policy (or Policies) and associated procedure(s).
- Consult with University Associate Deans during the drafting stage(s) of the Policy (or Policies) and associated procedure(s) to ensure various school standards (e.g., degree requirements) are appropriately taken into consideration.
- Recommend a draft Policy (or Policies) for review pursuant to the process described in Section VIII below and consider feedback received during that review.
- Recommend a draft procedure (or procedures) needed for the effective and efficient implementation of the proposed Policy (or Policies).

It is expected that the Committee will work in confidence to have full and frank discussion of all options. Individual members should maintain the deliberations of the Committee confidential and are expected to not discuss the content of the Committee’s deliberations outside of the Committee, unless authorized to do so by the Committee. The broader community will have an opportunity to consider the Committee’s proposals pursuant to the process described in Section VIII below.

VI. Composition

This Committee, at the direction of the VC-HR, will be chaired by **John Kozar**, Assistant Vice Chancellor, University Benefits. The Committee will include the following members:

1	Cassie Brenner	Project Director	Finance and Operations
2	Michaela Hardy	Benefits Analyst, Staff and Personal Leaves	Office of Human Resources
3	Victoria Lancaster	Assistant Vice Chancellor for Operational Excellence	Finance and Operations

Anthony Graham, Senior Policy Specialist, will help facilitate and support the Committee’s work on behalf of the Office of Policy Development and Management.

VII. Operations

The Committee will meet once per month or more frequently as circumstances dictate, until the work set forth above is complete. The Committee’s proposed Policy (or Policies), and supporting documents (e.g., guidelines and procedures), on Student Leave of Absence will be submitted to the VC-HR no later than November 2020. The VC-HR may ask for interim status reports.

After the VC-HR’s review is complete, the draft Policy (or Policies) will be submitted to the Office of Policy Development and Management (Policy Office) to coordinate its review consistent with Policy 01-01-01.

VIII. Proposed Policy Review Process

The review process for the Committee's recommended Policy (or Policies) will include:

- University comment period;
- Council of Deans;
- University Senate's Benefits and Welfare Committee;
- Faculty Assembly;
- University Senate Council; and
- Administration Leadership

The Committee will coordinate with the Policy Office to consider feedback provided throughout this process.

Once this review process is complete, the proposed Policy (or Policies) will be sent to the Policy Office for review and submission to the Chancellor in accordance with Policy 01-01-01.

IX. Amendment

Any amendments to this Charter must be made in accordance with Policy 01-01-01 and receive the approval of the Chancellor or designee.

This Committee shall expire on the publication of a new University Policy (or Policies) that governs education benefits, unless otherwise directed by the Chancellor.