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III-26 Educational Opportunities

(President 1/10/77; amended 9/93; 10/94; 9/97; 11/02; 6/05; 1/07; 8/13; 4/14; 10/15; 7/17; 2/19; 1/12/23; 8/7/24)

Effective August 7, 2024, this policy has been revised. For the most current version without redlining, return to [III-26](#).

26.1 General

(Amended 4/14; 10/15; 7/17; 8/7/24)

It is a policy of the University to encourage and assist staff members in developing ~~their work~~ skills for work and ~~to assist them in the achievement of~~ achieving their career aspirations. To that end, staff members are encouraged to participate in educational and developmental programs, conferences, and workshops held on or off campus, ~~or online~~, that relate to the ~~service rendered to the University by the participant work they perform~~. University staff are also encouraged to register for academic courses, with or without credit, that are work-related and advance the organizational efforts of ~~the their department or~~ the university. ~~To this end~~; Supervisors are ~~asked encouraged~~ to broadly define "work-related" course work to include the attainment of undergraduate degrees through the Tuition Assistance Program and the UI Health Care Tuition Reimbursement Program. Staff members may also participate in ~~programs such as~~ conferences, ~~or~~ workshops, ~~and courses, including online learning~~, that do not relate specifically to their work assignments but that will contribute to their overall educational and professional development ~~and well-being~~.

In all cases, a prime requirement for participation in university-sanctioned educational and developmental ~~programs offerings~~ is that the participation will not interfere with the staff member's ability to carry out regular duties. Individual units, at their discretion, may require an individual to obtain departmental approval prior to attending ~~Learning and Development~~ educational offerings.

Orientation (~~University~~ welcome and employee benefits) sessions are offered to new hires at the University of Iowa. Invitations to ~~New Faculty and Staff Orientation Iowa Welcome~~ (in LinkedIn Learning) and/or UI Health Care Orientation are sent to employees who:

- a. Have regular-status ~~appointments~~; and
- b. Work at least 50 percent time.

For more information, ~~on New Faculty and Staff Orientation and~~ visit [Iowa Welcome](#) and UI Health Care Orientation; ~~see~~ <https://hr.uiowa.edu/learn/orientation>.

26.2 Non-Credit Work-Related ~~Training Professional Development~~ Programs such as Conferences, ~~or~~ Workshops, and Online Learning for Staff Other Than Faculty

(Amended 8/99; 8/13; 7/17; 8/7/24)

Information about upcoming offerings is also available through the Learning and Development [Listserv](#), in [Employee Self Service](#), or through the Learning and Development website at <https://hr.uiowa.edu/learn>.

Participation is ~~governed~~ informed by the following guidelines:

- a. Approved ~~offerings professional development opportunities~~ are available to staff throughout the University, but enrollment in any given offering ~~is may be~~ limited by the work needs of the college, department, or unit. If demand for a specific offering is high, consideration will be given to repeating the offering.
- b. ~~Offerings Professional development opportunities~~ may be provided on or off campus, and the university may contract with outside agencies to provide additional workshops ~~as well~~. The fee to participants or their departments, if any, will be indicated when the offerings are announced.
- c. Staff who participate in work-related ~~offerings professional development opportunities, including online learning~~, are considered to be in work status during such participation and are not required to ~~take leave or make up time~~. ~~Staff members must provide their supervisors as much advance notice as possible when they wish to attend work-related education programs during their regular work hours~~.
- d. Approval to attend ~~Learning and Development~~ offerings may be required by individual units at their discretion. ~~Supervisors are encouraged to provide reasonable flexibility so that staff members may participate in work-related educated programs during regular work hours~~.

It is strongly recommended that individual colleges, departments, and/or units develop an educational plan for the benefit of their employees' continuous ~~learning professional development~~ and to meet the needs of a changing work environment. These plans may include outcome measures that are tied to the performance of the individual as well as the strategic initiatives of the department or unit.

26.3 Attendance at Non-Credit Conferences, ~~and~~ Workshops, and Online Learning That Are Not Work Related

(Amended 8/13; 7/17; 8/7/24)

University staff may participate in non-credit ~~offerings professional development opportunities~~ such as conferences, short courses, or workshops that are not work related if such participation will contribute to their overall educational and professional development. Such offerings may be provided on or off campus. The following guidelines apply:

- a. Participation in the offering does not interfere with the performance of regular duties.
- b. If offerings occur during regular work hours, a supervisor's approval may be needed.

26.4 (Reserved for future use)

26.5 Courses for Academic Credit

(Amended 8/13; 8/7/24)

Human Resources and University of Iowa Staff Council sponsor the Tuition Assistance Program. All eligible faculty and staff may apply for university support for course work that the ~~employing member's department certifies employee's supervisor verifies~~ is work related. This course work can be completed at either the University of Iowa or at other accredited universities or colleges. University employees who meet the eligibility requirements and are working on undergraduate degrees will be considered to meet the work-related eligibility requirement. For eligibility requirements and information on how ~~to access the online application form located at Employee Self Service~~; ~~visit~~ <https://hr.uiowa.edu/tuition> to apply, visit the Tuition Assistance Program ~~website~~.

26.6 Tuition and Fees of Faculty and Staff Registered for No Academic Credit (Audit)

(Amended 1/07; 4/14; 2/19; 8/7/24)

All faculty and staff with a 50 percent or greater ~~permanent regular~~ appointment, ~~and all postdoctoral scholars with a 50 percent or greater appointment~~, are eligible to audit (i.e., register for zero semester hours for) one University of Iowa ~~academic~~ course per session without being assessed tuition and mandatory fees for that course, subject to the following:

- a. The applicant is auditing the course to enhance professional development in their current position.
- b. The applicant must be admitted to the University either in a degree program or as a nondegree student.
- c. The applicant must receive permission to audit the course from the instructor.
- d. The applicant must receive permission from their departmental executive officer. Faculty also must receive permission from the college dean or associate dean.
- e. ~~Any accommodation or modification related to work hours for class attendance requires approval of the employing unit~~.
- f. The applicant will be responsible for any course-specific fees.
- g. Courses are not repeatable.

The application form is available in Universal Workflow.

26.7 Courses for Maintaining Professional Licensing Requirements

A staff or faculty member who holds a professional license and must participate in training and/or educational programs to maintain such license may participate in accordance with the requirements of local, state, and/or federal law. A licensee may participate during regular working hours without using paid leave when the employing department requests the employee to participate in the educational or training program for university employment related purposes.

Faculty or staff must use paid leave to attend educational programs for professional licensing requirements when the above conditions are not met. Participation in any educational or training program for licensing purposes must be in accordance with the general requirements of this section.

26.8 Other Awards for Staff

(Amended 8/13; 4/14; 8/7/24)

- a. Professional Development Award. Staff may be eligible to receive free admission to a fee-required Learning and Development-sponsored offering through the Professional Development Award drawing. Staff members employed in a regular appointment, 50 percent time or greater, are sent an email notification twice a year.
- b. Mary Jo Small Staff Fellowship Award Program. This ~~is an~~ award ~~that University of Iowa is available to staff may use~~ to help defray costs of regional, national, or international meetings or workshops, training opportunities on and off-campus, and/or work-release time to prepare publications. Specific award guidelines, available through the Mary Jo Small Staff Fellowship Award website, include:
 - (1) All professional and scientific and merit staff members who hold a regular appointment of 50 percent or greater and have been employed for two or more years at the University (with no breaks in employment) by the application deadline are eligible for the Mary Jo Small Staff Fellowship.
 - (2) Selection for the awards will be based upon documentation of recognized contributions that support the university's mission and goals.

See also the Learning and Development website at <https://hr.uiowa.edu/learn/mary-jo-small-staff-fellowship-award>.