SECTION VI: COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

A. FACULTY COMPENSATION
Salaries and fringe benefits constitute the method of compensation.
1. Full-Time Faculty
   Initial salaries are determined by academic preparation, degrees held, previous teaching and
discipline-related work experience. Thereafter, salaries are based on individual merit. Merit
compensation is determined by the President and the EVP/DAA and approved by the Board of
Trustees after intensive review of self-evaluations, evaluations by department chairs and student
evaluations. Teaching effectiveness, advising, scholarship and professional development, degrees
earned, and service to the College and the community are the main criteria evaluated when
determining merit compensation. Specific forms for conducting evaluations are reviewed by the
Welfare and Personnel Policies Committee of the Faculty Association and approved by the
Faculty Association.

2. Salary Goals for Full-Time Faculty
   Columbia College compares itself with a cohort of similar colleges to establish salaries for its
full-time faculty. The College strives, first, to have its mean salaries for each rank exceed 90% of
the mean salaries for the comparison group and, second, to have its mean salaries for each rank
attain at least the 50th percentile of the mean salaries paid at other institutions of the comparison
group. A separate analysis is conducted for each rank of nine-month faculty in an attempt to reach
these goals.

3. Adjunct Faculty
   Salaries are determined by a set scale.

4. Special-Duty Compensation (Paid Professional Assignment)
   A faculty member may be compensated by a reduced teaching load or additional pay
commensurate with the special function.

B. RETIREMENT PLAN
The College’s retirement plan (Plan) is a defined contribution tax-deferred annuity plan, set up under
Internal Revenue Service Code 403(b), with its plan year beginning on July 1 each year and ending
on June 30. It is mandatory both as a condition of employment and as required by the agreement by
the Plan that all eligible employees must participate in the Plan. Employees who began employment
at the College on June 20, 2000, or before are fully vested in the plan upon entrance. Employees who
began employment at the College on July 1, 2000 or after vest 20% in their account during the first
year in the plan, and an additional 20% in each year of eligible service thereafter. Employees hired
after July 1, 2000 are fully vested in the retirement plan after six full years of continuous
employment.

1. Eligibility
   Employees must fulfill all the following eligibility requirements of the Adoption Agreement for
the College’s retirement plan:
   a. complete one year of service;
   b. be 21 years of age; and
   c. work at least 1,000 hours* or more per plan year, regardless of full- or part-time status.

* This does not apply to adjunct/part-time faculty of the College.
2. Entry Date into Retirement Plan
   After the eligibility requirements are met, employees who began employment with the College on or before June 30, 2000, are eligible to enroll in the plan on the first day of the month following their one-year anniversary hire date. Employees starting on or after July 1, 2000, may enter the plan on the first entrance date following their one year anniversary of eligible service. Plan entrance dates are January 1, April 1, July 1, and October 1, of each year.

3. College Contribution
   At the discretion of the Trustees, the College may contribute a certain percentage of annual eligible wages to the individual’s retirement plan. This amount is determined annually by the Board of Trustees and is announced at the beginning of each plan year on July 1.

4. Employee Elective Contribution
   Employees are not required to contribute to the retirement plan. However, they may elect to contribute up to a certain maximum percentage of their annual wages, excluding the College’s contribution, toward their retirement. The maximum percentage of employee-elected contribution is controlled by IRS regulations. Contact the Human Resources Office for further details.

Optional Deductions: Employees may also contribute to other College-sanctioned, tax-deferred annuities by salary-reduction agreement. This option is available from the beginning date of employment. Further information is available from the Human Resources Office.

5. Retirement Questions
   All questions regarding the retirement plan should be directed to the Human Resources Office or to the College’s local retirement plan representative after enrollment. After an employee is enrolled in the retirement plan, he/she will be furnished with a summary plan description booklet which has complete details of the plan. Also, the College will conduct open pre-enrollment sessions at appropriate times throughout the year.

6. Employee Termination or Retirement
   When employees terminate or retire from the College, they must contact the Human Resources Office to complete appropriate forms for disposition of funds contributed on their behalf by the College, as well as their own elective contributions. Departing employees who are not fully vested (i.e., before having waited six years, at which time he or she becomes 100% vested) forfeit a percentage of funds contributed by the College, but are entitled to keep their elective contributions.

C. INSURANCE BENEFITS

1. Scope
   Columbia College provides employer-paid group insurance for all eligible full-time faculty members. Included are life insurance, unemployment and worker’s compensation insurance, and long-term disability insurance. Eligible faculty can also elect health and dental insurance. Each faculty member receives materials explaining coverage and benefits in detail, including a certificate of insurance.

   The health coverage portion of the policy provides for basic hospital, surgical, and major-medical benefits and is available at a cost to the faculty. Dental coverage is available to eligible faculty members at a reduced cost. The life insurance portion of the policy provides for life-insurance coverage equal to two times their annual salary with an added provision for accidental death and
dismemberment (ADD). This provision covers loss of limbs and other physical losses and also provides for double the amount of life insurance in case of accidental death. The ADD benefit terminates upon retirement or upon the employee’s resignation or termination. A separate group policy provides for long-term disability coverage.

2. Eligibility
All full-time faculty are eligible for insurance coverage. Eligibility for all coverage begins on the effective date of the employee’s contract, except for the long-term disability provision, which begins six months after the effective date of contract.

3. Spouse and Dependent Coverage
Spouses and eligible dependents of faculty members may enroll in the health, life or dental insurance plans at a cost to the employee. Employee, spouse and dependent coverage must be obtained within the first 30 days of employment.

4. Medicare Coverage
A faculty member reaching age 65 and becoming eligible for Medicare coverage is covered by the College group plan as the primary carrier and by Medicare as secondary carrier.

D. TYPES OF INSURANCE
1. Health Insurance
Group health insurance is available to full-time faculty members effective the first day of employment at a minimal cost to the employee. Coverage for spouses and/or dependents is available at a cost to the employee. Dependent and/or spouse coverage must be obtained within the first 30 days of employment. Employees should request a conference with or contact Human Resources for a complete explanation of health insurance benefits.

2. Dental Insurance
Group dental insurance is available for full-time faculty members effective on the day the employee signs the enrollment form. This insurance is provided at a minimal cost to the employee. Coverage for spouses and/or dependents is available at a cost to the employee.

3. Vision Insurance
Vision insurance is available for full-time faculty members, spouses and/or dependents effective on the first day of employment. Faculty are responsible for the cost and there is a two year commitment following enrollment in the plan.

4. Life Insurance
Eligible faculty members receive group life insurance coverage in the amount equal to two times their annual salary effective the first day of employment. This insurance is provided at no cost to the employee. In addition, employees can purchase voluntary life insurance.

For any faculty member employed a minimum of 15 years with the College and retired to non-working status at the age of 62 or older, the College continues to maintain the life insurance until the death of that retired faculty member.

5. Accidental Death and Dismemberment
Coverage is provided as part of the College’s group life insurance plan and is equal to two times the annual salary effective the first day of employment. This insurance is provided at no cost to the employee.
6. Long-Term Disability
The College’s group plan for long-term insures an employee sixty percent (60%) of salary if totally disabled and unable to work. Compensation begins ninety days after the disability has occurred.

7. Section 125 Cafeteria Plan
Full-time faculty members are eligible to participate in the Section 125 Cafeteria Plan after 90 days of employment. This plan allows participants the opportunity to reduce their taxable earnings, thus saving federal and state income and social security taxes on the deferred amount. The plan offers three new accounts from which to participate: dependent care assistance, health insurance, and medical reimbursement.

Special provisions, exceptions, inclusions, and terminations are explained in the insurance handbooks.

9. Compensation Resulting from Federal and State Legislation
All faculty members are covered by Social Security, unemployment benefits, and workers’ compensation, as required by law. Further details can be obtained from the Payroll Office.

10. Termination of Benefits
All insurance coverage ends on the employee’s termination date under the College’s group plan. In the event a faculty member resigns after returning a signed contract for the upcoming academic year, benefits will be terminated on the date the College is notified of the resignation. The faculty member will then be responsible for reimbursing the College for insurance premiums paid after the close of the previous year’s contract. Details are available in the Payroll Office. Under COBRA (Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act) Law, a terminating employee may continue his/her group health, dental and/or vision coverage up to a certain maximum time allowable at his/her own expense. Life insurance coverage may be extended via a private conversion privilege allowed under the College’s group plan at the terminating employee’s own expense.

E. LEAVES OF ABSENCE
1. Leave with Pay
The College permits absence from the classroom and other responsibilities without loss of compensation in certain particular kinds of circumstances and for limited periods of time. The College honors applicable provisions of federal and state law relating to leaves.

   a. Sick Leave
   Faculty members accrue sick leave at the rate of ten days per nine-month contractual period, the cumulative total not to exceed ninety days. Upon termination of employment, unused and accrued sick leave is not counted for pay purposes. Sick leave in excess of this duration is without pay and must be approved by the President. Sick leave may be used for absences due to illness or dental or medical appointments. Sick leave is normally authorized for the personal illness, injury, dental or medical appointments of the employee, but the same can also be authorized for the employee’s family or household if the employee is the individual primarily relied upon to render care to the child, elder, spouse or other member of his/her family or household.

   b. Emergency Leave
Emergency leave applies only in cases of serious illness or death in the immediate family or other comparable emergencies. Emergency leave may not exceed five working days per academic year unless unusual circumstances prevail. Emergency leave in excess of this duration is without pay. Emergency leave of five or fewer days is approved by the EVP/DAA, who immediately notifies the President of this action; emergency leave beyond five days is approved by the President.

c. Court Duty
Leave with pay may be taken for jury duty, duty as witness or other court obligations.

d. Military Reserve or National Guard Duty
Faculty who are members of the National Guard or armed forces reserves do not suffer a loss of income when called to active training (the College makes up the difference if military pay is not equal to the faculty member’s regular pay; however, individuals may not receive the total amount of their College pay and military pay). Faculty are encouraged to arrange their military service for the time when they are not under obligation to the College.

e. Holidays and Class Breaks
Faculty are entitled to those holidays on which the College is closed and those days between semesters when no classes are held. Faculty responsible for instructional or administrative activities during recess must meet their obligations.

f. Leave to Attend Professional Conferences and Meetings
The College grants leave without loss of salary to faculty to attend state, national, or international meetings as long as such absence does not disrupt the educational process. Approval for such absence is obtained from the immediate supervisor.

Faculty members attending such meetings may apply to the Elections and Professional Development Committee for reimbursement for expenses incurred. Such requests are honored in whole or in part, when possible.

g. Other Leave
Faculty may be granted leave with pay by the President for other circumstances deemed appropriate by the President.

2. Leave without Pay
Leave without pay is granted by the President to a faculty member for good cause, upon the recommendation of the department chair and EVP/DAA. Normally, application for such leave is made prior to the beginning of the preceding semester. The maximum period of continuous leave without pay is one year unless special permission for an extension is granted by the President. A faculty member who does not return to the College following such a leave is terminated. Sick leave does not accumulate during periods of leave without pay, but prior accumulated totals are not forfeited. Leave without pay has no effect on tenure status, time in rank, or consideration for sabbatical leave, but no additional time accumulates during leave. In order to retain College benefits while on leave without pay, the faculty member must make arrangements with the Payroll Office to pay the cost of said benefits for the period of leave. The College honors applicable provisions of federal and state law relating to leaves without pay.

Leave without pay is appropriate in the following cases:

a. Service in the Armed Forces
The College honors applicable provisions of federal and state law identifying and protecting employee privileges, benefits and rights when an employee is involuntarily inducted to serve in any branch of the armed forces. A faculty member involuntarily called into military service is entitled to reinstatement in a comparable full-time position upon release from military obligation if the faculty member makes application for such reinstatement within 90 days after being released from service in the armed forces.

b. Absence in the Interest of the College
Faculty may participate in advanced academic training, research or other experiences that increase professional competence or promote the interests of the College.

c. Personal Leave
Faculty may be granted leave for reasons beyond sick leave with pay or other leave with pay such as personal business or emergency leave.

d. Disability or Extended Leave
Faculty may be granted leave for illness or injury beyond the paid leave period. The duration of this type of leave without pay may not exceed 180 days, including both the paid and unpaid leave periods, but in extenuating circumstances the President may extend such period to a total of 365 days.

e. Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) of 1993
Columbia College complies with the federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) enacted into law on February 5, 1993 (effective August 5, 1993). In general, FMLA entitles qualified employees to take up to twelve (12) weeks of unpaid leave per year for the birth or adoption of a child, to care for a spouse or an immediate family member with a serious health condition, or when unable to work because of a serious health condition.

In compliance with federal law and out of concern for the welfare of the College’s employees and their families, Columbia College grants family and medical leave under the conditions and specifications as set forth below.

**Eligibility.** To be eligible for family and medical leave, an employee must have been employed by the College:
- for at least twelve months; and
- for at least 1,250 hours during the twelve-month period preceding the start of the leave; and
- where Columbia College employs at least 50 employees within a 75-mile radius.

Columbia College has determined that all AHE campuses will be covered by FMLA although they may not technically qualify as outlined by the FMLA statutes. Although the campus itself qualifies, each employee is subjected to the first two regulations to personally qualify for the leave as well as the approved Medical Certification, as noted below.

The benefit to leave for the birth or placement of a child for adoption or foster care expires twelve months from the date of the birth or placement.

**Reasons for Leave.** All employees who meet the applicable eligibility requirements may be granted a total of 12 weeks of family leave, unpaid and sick leave combined (during a rolling 12-month period) for the following reasons:
- the birth of the employee’s child and in order to care for the child;
- the placement of a child with the employee for adoption or foster care;
- to care for a spouse, child, or parent who has a serious health condition; or
- a serious health condition that renders the employee incapable of performing the functions of his or her job.

Limitations. As outlined in this policy, an eligible faculty member is entitled to a total of 12 workweeks of leave during any 12-month period. For purposes of calculating the 12 month period, Columbia College will use a rolling 12-month period, measured forward, that begins on the date an employee first starts FMLA leave. Under no circumstances will a faculty member be allowed to “stack” leaving by taking two 12 week leaves back to back.

If family or medical leave is requested for an employee’s own serious health condition, or for the serious health condition of the employee’s spouse, child, or parent, the employee must use all his or her accrued paid sick leave and accrued paid vacation leave prior to unpaid family or medical leave.

The leave that may be taken by spouses who work for Columbia College is limited to a combined total of twelve workweeks during any 12-month period if leave is taken for birth or placement for adoption or foster care. This limitation applies even if the spouses work at different work sites or in different departments of Columbia College. This limitation does not apply to leave taken by either spouse to care for the other who is seriously ill and unable to work, to care for a child or parent with a serious health condition, or for his or her own serious illness.

Use of Sick Leave During Family Medical Leave
A faculty member receiving approval for Family and Medical Leave is required to use eligible paid accrued sick leave concurrently with their Family and Medical Leave. Upon the exhaustion of the member's available paid time-off, the remainder of his/her Family and Medical Leave will be on an unpaid basis.

Procedures.
Requesting Leave
In all cases, an employee requesting leave completes an Application for Family and Medical Leave and submits it to the Human Resources Office. The completed application states the reason for the leave, the duration of the leave, and the starting and ending dates of the leave.

An employee intending to take family or medical leave because of an expected birth or placement of a child for adoption or foster care, or because of a planned medical treatment, submits an application for leave at least 30 calendar days before the leave is to begin. If 30 calendar days of notice is not provided in one of the above mentioned situations, Columbia College may elect to deny the family and medical leave.

If leave is to begin within 30 days, an employee must give notice to his or her immediate supervisor, and the Human Resources Office and completes an Application for Family and Medical Leave as soon as the necessity for the leave arises.

Medical Certification
An Application for Medical and Family Leave based on the serious health condition of the employee or the employee’s spouse, child, or parent must be accompanied by a Medical Certification Statement completed by a health-care provider. The employee must provide the medical certification within 15 calendar days of the requested family and medical leave, unless it is not practical do so under the circumstances, in which case the employee must provide the Medical Certification Statement to the Human Resources Office as soon as the necessity for the leave arises.

The Medical Certification Statement must state the date on which the health condition commenced, the probable duration of the condition, and the appropriate medical facts regarding the condition. It must also contain the signatures of the appropriate individuals as listed on the statement.

If the employee is needed to care for a spouse, child, or parent, the certification must state this need, along with an estimate of the amount of time the employee will be needed. If the employee has a serious health condition, the certification must state that the employee cannot perform the functions of his or her job.

The Medical Certification Statement is provided to Columbia College at the employee’s expense. Columbia College may require the employee obtain a second medical opinion from a health-care provider selected by Columbia College, at the expense of the College. Columbia College may require a third opinion, again at the expense of the College, from a health-care provider mutually agreed upon by Columbia College and the employee. The third medical opinion is final.

**Intermittent Leave or Reduced Workweek**
An employee taking leave for the birth of a child, or because of placement or adoption of foster care of a child, may take family and medical leave intermittently or by working a reduced workweek only with the approval of Columbia College. An employee may apply to use family and medical leave intermittently or by working a reduced workweek, whenever medically necessary, to care for a seriously ill family member or because of the employee’s own serious health condition. These conditions must be verified by the health-care provider on the Medical Certification Statement.

**Approval Chain**
Upon receipt of properly completed Leave of Absence Application and the Medical Certification Statement forms, they should be turned into the Human Resources Office for processing. The Human Resources Office will then complete an “Employer Response to Employee Request for Family or Medical Leave” if the leave is approved. If the leave is not approved the Human Resources Office will contact the employee and schedule a meeting to discuss why the leave was denied.

**Benefits Coverage During Leave**
During a period of family or medical leave, an employee is retained on the Columbia College health plan under the same conditions that applied before leave commenced. If the employee has enrolled his or her dependent(s) in the Columbia College group health plan, he or she must pay the appropriate premium by the first day of each month or dependent coverage is terminated within 30 days following the due date of the premium.

If the employee fails to return to work after the expiration of the leave, the employee is required to reimburse Columbia College for payment of health-insurance premiums during
the family leave, unless the reason the employee fails to return is the presence of a serious health condition that prevents the employee from performing his or her job or is due to other circumstances beyond the employee’s control.

An employee is not entitled to the accrual of any seniority or employment benefits (such as sick leave or retirement benefits) that would have accrued if not for the taking of leave. An employee who takes family or medical leave does not lose any seniority or employment benefits that accrued before the date leave began.

**Return to Employment**

An employee must complete a Notice of Intention to Return from Family or Medical Leave before he or she can be returned to active status. If an employee wishes to return to work prior to the expiration of family or medical leave of absence, notification must be given to his or her immediate supervisor at least two working days prior to the employee’s planned return.

During the period of family and medical leave, the employee is required to report biweekly to his or her immediate supervisor in regard to the employee’s return to work.

**Restoration to Employment Following Leave**

An employee eligible for family and medical leave – with exception of those employees designated as key employees – is restored to his or her old position or to a position with equivalent pay, benefits, and other terms and conditions of employment. Columbia College cannot guarantee that an employee will be returned to his or her original job.

A key employee eligible for family and medical leave may or may not be restored to his or her previous position or to an equivalent position (i.e., a position with equivalent pay, benefits, and other terms of employment) depending on the College’s judgment regarding whether such reinstatement would cause substantial and grievous economic injury to the College.

The determination of whether a position is an “equivalent position” and whether reinstatement will cause substantial and grievous economic injury is made by Columbia College (i.e., by the president after consultation with Administrative Council). Key employees are informed of the possibility of non-reinstatement prior to the beginning of their leave.

**Failure to Return from Leave**

The failure of an employee to return to work upon the expiration of a family or medical leave absence will subject the employee to immediate termination unless an extension is granted. An employee, who requests an extension of family leave or medical leave due to the continuation, recurrence, or onset of his or her own serious health or of the serious health condition of the employee’s spouse, child, or parent, must submit a request for extension in writing, to the Human Resources Office. The written request is made as soon as the employee realizes that he or she will not be able to return at the expiration of the leave period.

f. **Other Leave**

Faculty may be granted leave by the President for other circumstances deemed appropriate by the President.
3. Sabbatical Leave
Sabbatical leave is a paid leave of absence granted to a faculty member by the President for the purpose of study, formal education, travel, research, writing, or other approved experiences of professional value. The purpose of sabbatical leave is to improve the quality of instruction at, and service to, the institution through professional development of individual faculty members. Sabbatical leave is not an inalienable right earned simply through accumulation of years of service, though seniority may be a criterion for selection. It represents an investment by the College in the future of its academic program; therefore, faculty members are expected to return the benefit they derive from sabbatical leaves, thereby permitting the College to regain a part of its investment.

The President will report to the Board of Trustees all sabbatical leave approvals that have occurred since the previous Board meeting.

a. Eligibility
Sabbatical leave may be requested by full-time, tenured faculty members who have provided a minimum of six full years of service as faculty members to Columbia College and who hold the rank of assistant professor, associate professor or professor.

b. Frequency
No faculty member may be granted sabbatical leave more than once in any seven-year period.

c. Duration
Sabbatical leave may be requested for either one semester at full pay or two semesters at half pay.

d. Procedures for Obtaining a Sabbatical Leave
- Faculty members desiring to be considered for sabbatical leaves for the following contract year notify the EVP/DAA in writing by September 1.

- The EVP/DAA verifies and reports the eligibility of applicants and reports to the applicants and their department chairs in writing by September 15.

- Qualified applicants present sabbatical proposals and a completed “Request for Sabbatical Leave” form to their department chairs by October 1. The proposal includes the following: (1) a statement of purpose and activities to be undertaken, (2) a justification for the sabbatical and its contribution to the professional development of the faculty member and its benefit to the College, and (3) signed agreement on the request form to abide by requirements of a sabbatical leave in relation to reporting, returning to service at the College, and financial compensation and obligations.

- Department chairs, after review in consultation with full-time department members, forward the sabbatical proposal along with the department chair’s written recommendation to the EVP/DAA by October 15. The department chair, in making this recommendation, includes provisions to be made for covering the faculty member’s duties for the duration of the sabbatical.

- The EVP/DAA verifies that all required elements are present and forwards the proposal and the department chair’s recommendation to the Elections and Professional Development Committee of the Faculty Association by October 25.
• The Elections and Professional Development Committee reviews the proposal and the department chair’s recommendation and reports the committee’s recommendation to the EVP/DAA no later than November 15. The entire proposal package, including the recommendation of the EVP/DAA, is available to the President by November 20.

• The President acts for the Board of Trustees in granting final approval of sabbaticals. The President’s acceptance or rejection of the proposal is stated in writing to the EVP/DAA and to the applicant by December 1.

• If the President rejects the proposal, an appeal in writing to the Educational Policy Committee of the Board of Trustees may be made before the winter meeting. The Educational Policy Committee presents its recommendation to the Board of Trustees at the winter meeting, and the decision of the Board is final.

e. Fringe Benefits
   Columbia College continues the faculty member’s fringe benefits during sabbatical leave. However, accumulation of sick leave and, if applicable, vacation days, is excluded from fringe benefits while on sabbatical.

f. Compensation
   Total remuneration during sabbaticals may not exceed the normal full-time compensation of the faculty member as an employee of Columbia College. To the extent that compensation from outside the College exceeds the difference between the sabbatical stipend and full-time salary, the sabbatical stipend is reduced accordingly. Grant monies, scholarships and fellowships, however, do not affect sabbatical pay.

g. Number of Sabbaticals
   No more than ten percent of the members of the faculty may be on sabbatical leave during the same semester, and no more than one faculty member from each department may be on sabbatical leave at the same time.

h. Service Obligation
   Faculty members who are granted sabbatical leave are obligated for one additional year of service to Columbia College at the conclusion of the leave period. Faculty members who do not fulfill this obligation to return to the College are required to repay the College the full salary and cost of fringe benefits received from the College during the sabbatical. A promissory note agreeing to these terms must be signed before the sabbatical is granted. Death, disability or dismissal satisfies in full the promissory note.

i. Reporting Requirements
   Within 30 calendar days into the succeeding semester after the completion of a sabbatical leave, faculty members file reports containing a description of the activities undertaken during the sabbatical, an assessment of the success of those activities in relation to the declared objectives of the sabbatical proposal and an analysis of their worth to the individuals and to the College. Reports are submitted to the EVP/DAA and to the President and become part of the faculty members’ permanent files.

j. Compliance with Specifications
   Failure of a faculty member to follow specified procedures and written deadlines for submitting sabbatical requests may constitute grounds for denial of sabbatical leave.
k. Suspension or Limitation of Sabbaticals
When, in the judgment of the President and the Administrative Council, financial conditions warrant, the President may recommend to the Board of Trustees that no sabbaticals be granted for a specified period, or that the number of sabbaticals be limited or reduced, or that sabbaticals already approved but not in process be postponed.

F. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

1. Employee Educational Grant (EEG).
As part of its mission, Columbia College strives to broaden educational opportunities. The Employee Educational Grant (EEG) program is offered by the College to its full-time employees and adjunct faculty that allows them, their spouses, and their single under the age of 25 (prior to the start of the term) children to enroll in Columbia College courses without tuition charge or at reduced cost. Designated employees are allowed the opportunity to fulfill educational goals by enrolling in courses in order to enhance job skills and work performance, or to complete a college degree.

Effective January 1, 2007, full-time employees and adjuncts may access undergraduate online courses at a rate of 25% of tuition. Columbia College pays 75% and a payment plan is required. This benefit does not extend to dependents or spouses of full-time employees.

a. Employees.

Full-time Employees.
After completion of six months of continuous employment with Columbia College, full-time permanent employees of Columbia College, unless in default of a Stafford, Supplemental Student, Parent, or Perkins loan, or on academic probation, are eligible for an EEG of up to 15.0 semester hours per semester, or 6 hours per session. This grant allows current employees to enroll in in-seat classes at Columbia College without tuition charge. Employees pay 25% of tuition for online classes and a payment plan is required. All other educational expenses except tuition are borne by the employee (e.g., expenses for books, lab fees, application fee). Employees and/or their dependents residing on campus pay regular rates for room, board, and other services. Full-time employees at AHE campuses may attend classes under EEG at any location of Columbia College. The grant value will be determined by the tuition charged at specific campuses.

Adjunct Faculty.
All adjunct faculty of Columbia College, their spouses and children, unless in default of a Stafford, Supplemental Student, Parent, or Perkins loan, or on academic probation, are eligible for an EEG equal to the number of course semester hours they are currently teaching. Adjunct faculty are eligible to apply for an EEG following three sessions of teaching. Classes may be taken during the same semester/session in which the adjunct is teaching or one course may be reserved to be taken during the same fiscal year in a session when not teaching. The grant allows the employee to enroll in undergraduate classes at Columbia College without tuition charge. Adjunct faculty may attend classes under the EEG at any Columbia College location. The grant value will be determined by the tuition charged at specific campuses. Adjunct faculty pay 25% of tuition for online classes and a payment plan is required.

Part-time Employees.
Part-time administrative or support staff, their spouses and children, are not eligible for EEG.

b. Spouses and Children.
   Full-time Employees.
   After completion of six months of continuous employment with Columbia College, a current full-time employee’s spouse and single children under the age of 25 (prior to the start of a term), unless in default on a Stafford, Supplemental Student, Parent, or Perkins loan, or on academic probation, are eligible to enroll in in-seat classes at Columbia College for up to eighteen hours per semester or six hours per session, without tuition charge. All other educational expenses except tuition are borne by the student (e.g., expenses for books, lab fees, application fee). Grantees are subject to the housing requirement and individuals residing on campus pay regular rates for room, board, and other services. Spouses and children of full-time employees at AHE campuses may attend classes under EEG at any location of Columbia College.

   Determination of the status “child” for the purposes of EEG is made by the Human Resources Office based on the following three criteria:
   • The person is under 25 years of age, prior to the start of the term, in which enrollment is intended.
   • The person is unmarried.
   • The person is the natural or legal child of the employee; that is, the person has one of the following relationships with the employee:
     o is the biological child of the employee,
     o is legally adopted by the employee,
     o is legally under the guardianship of the employee,
     o is the step-child of the employee,
     o is the foster child of the employee,

   Note: Persons defined as children may or may not be living with an employee and may or may not have legal dependents.

   Adjunct Faculty
   Spouses and children of adjunct faculty, following three sessions of teaching by the adjunct faculty, and unless in default of a Stafford, Supplemental Student, Parent, or Perkins loan, or on academic probation, are eligible for an EEG equal to the number of course semester hours the faculty member is currently teaching. Spouses and children of adjunct faculty may attend in-seat classes under EEG at any Columbia College location, but only during the same semester/session in which the adjunct faculty member is teaching. The grant value will be determined by the tuition charged at specific campuses.

   Part-time Employees
   Spouses and children of part-time administrative or support staff are not eligible for EEG.

c. Procedures.
   Determination of the status “child” for the purposes of EEG is made by the Human Resources Office based on the criteria listed above.

   Recipients of EEG are not eligible to receive any other institutional aid other than awards granted at the Honors and Awards Convocation. EEG may not be used for courses-of-one or classes taught on a one-time basis, e.g., piano or voice.
To apply for an EEG, the applicant must do the following:

- Apply for admission to the College as a regular student or as a non-degree seeking student.
- Obtain an EEG verification form and an Application for Financial Aid from the Registration and Financial Services Office. If the applicant is a child of an employee, he or she makes an appointment with a member of the Human Resources staff to determine eligibility. All recipients of an EEG are encouraged to apply for federal financial aid. Employee Education Grants funding will be applied before any other financial aid.
- Complete the EEG verification form and the Application for Financial Aid with all appropriate information and obtain signatures from the employee’s immediate supervisor and Administrative Council supervisor.
- Return the forms to the Registration and Financial Services Office no later than the end of the add period.
- Register for courses through standard registration procedures for undergraduate land-based and online courses.

AHE employees, their spouses, or dependents who wish to receive an EEG must submit the EEG form to and obtain approval from the AHE Campus Director prior to the session for which the grant is requested. The AHE campus director then sends the EEG form, along with the registration form, to the Vice President for the Division of Adult Higher Education in Columbia, for approval to attend classes, no later than the end of the add period.

Employees eligible for EEG may enroll in one of the following:

- one course (up to 5 semester hours) per semester during regular working hours (if employee plans to take courses during regular working hours, he/she must obtain approval from his/her immediate supervisor to make up any work time missed while attending classes.);
- one course (up to 5 semester hours) per semester and one three-credit course per session in the evening;
- two three-credit courses per session in the evening or through AHE.

d. Effects of Termination, Resignation, Disability or Death.

If an employee resigns from or is terminated by the College, EEG benefits cease on the date of severance for both the employee and his or her spouse or children. Enrollment in courses may be continued, but financial liability for those courses becomes the responsibility of the student and is prorated on a per-day basis from the date of severance. If the employee or spouse or children do not wish to continue enrollment at their own expense, they must complete formal withdrawal procedures. In no event may such courses taken for credit be converted to audit status.

If an EEG eligible employee becomes disabled or deceased, currently enrolled dependents may continue coursework under the EEG Grant for the remainder of the academic year.

e. Guidelines.

The decision whether to conduct a class or to cancel it because of low enrollment is made without considering the number of employees, spouses and/or children desiring that course under EEG. EEG students may not be used to fill the gap between the number of students needed to run a course and the number of non-employees registered for that course.
2. Employee Graduate Educational Grant (GEG)

The Employee Graduate Educational Grant (GEG) allows full-time employees only to enroll in up to six hours per session of in-seat graduate courses at a tuition reduction of 75%. Spouses, dependents, adjunct faculty and part-time employees are not eligible for a GEG. Full-time employees are not eligible for the GEG until completion of one year of employment at Columbia College. The GEG does not apply to courses in the College’s Online program.

a. Procedures.
   Application procedures are identical to those used for the EEG.

b. Effects of Termination, Resignation, Disability or Death.
   Effects of Termination, Resignation, Disability or Death are identical to those of EEG.

c. Guidelines.
   Guidelines to determine if a graduate class is canceled due to low enrollment are identical to those for EEG.

3. Tuition Exchange

Columbia College is affiliated with two exchange programs: Council of Independent Colleges (CIC) and Tuition Exchange, Inc. Membership in “The Tuition Exchange” provides the opportunity for full-time employees and children of full-time employees who have not completed a baccalaureate degree to attend other member institutions with little or no charge for tuition. All students must apply for admission to the institution they wish to attend and that institution determines admission and admission procedures. For a list of Tuition Exchange member institutions refer to www.tuitionexchange.org. Tuition Exchange has stringent rules to keep the “export” and “import” of students at each member institution in close balance.

The following are guidelines applicable to Columbia College employees who wish to participate in the TE program:

  e. Eligible Employee: Any currently employed Columbia College full-time faculty or staff.

  f. Family Member: Any child born to an employee, legally adopted by an employee, or for whom legal guardianship can be documented. Student must be a dependent as defined by federal guidelines.

  g. Candidate: The family member of an eligible employee who has been certified by Columbia College for full-time degree study at a college or university that participates in the Tuition Exchange program. Scholarships are not granted for graduate study, non-degree study or second undergraduate degrees.

  h. Maximum Scholarship: TE scholarships will not exceed a maximum of eight semesters per employee per child and they may be divided among family members.

  i. Tuition Exchange Liaison Officer: Director of Human Resources.

By September 15 of each academic year family members of Columbia College faculty and staff who wish to be considered for TE will notify the TE Liaison Officer of intent and formally register.
j. By November 1 of each academic year, Columbia College will be in a position to determine how many new students can be certified.

k. If the number of applicants is equal to the number of slots available, each applicant will be given the opportunity to seek a TE scholarship and Columbia College will sponsor the prospective student by certifying him or her as a TE Candidate and sending notice of certification to as many as six TE member schools to which the candidate has applied or plans to apply.

l. If the number of prospective candidates exceeds the number of slots, candidates will be selected on the following priority ranking:
   - First priority will be given to applicants based on employment seniority of the faculty/staff member. Seniority is based on years of continuous full-time service at Columbia College.
   - Last priority will be given to students with family members who have already received a TE scholarship.

Columbia College is also a member of the “Council of Independent Colleges (CIC) Tuition Exchange.” Membership in the CIC provides the opportunity for children of full-time employees who have not completed a baccalaureate degree to attend other member institutions with little or no charge for tuition. Although a debit-credit balance of students does not have to be maintained, Columbia College will always insure that a balance of students is maintained at least in the College’s favor. For a list of CIC Tuition Exchange member institutions refer to www.cic.org.

Students who wish to participate in the CIC Tuition Exchange program should contact the Columbia College Human Resources Office for specific details relating to application for the program. Students who participate in the CIC Tuition Exchange program will be certified by Columbia College for one year, and recertified each succeeding year. However, continuation in the program for the second or more years depends on the policies in place at each member institution.

4. Flexible Spending Account (Cafeteria Plan).
   This plan allows participants the opportunity to reduce their taxable earnings, thus saving federal and state income and social security taxes on the deferred amount. Full-time employees are eligible to participate in three menu accounts: dependent care assistance, medical, dental and/or vision insurance premiums, and medical reimbursement.

5. Professional Development Grants.
   a. General Criteria
      - General expenses incurred in the execution and completion of faculty research projects (to include funding for presentation and/or publication of projects).
      - Funds for the purchase of primary resource material for classroom and/or personal research.
      - Funds to bring scholars/speakers/celebrities to Columbia College (specifically to set up panel/discussion conferences which would include CC faculty).
      - Funding for travel to conferences (or other formal/informal gatherings) which apply directly to personal research and/or classroom content improvement.
      - Funding for faculty-directed student research projects.
• Expenses incurred in the physical production/completion of scholarly projects (i.e., typing of manuscripts, photography, telephone, postage, etc.).

b. Application Form and Specific Criteria
• Form the application should take:
  o Cover sheet
    - title of proposed study or creative project
    - duration of the project
    - name of applicant
  o Project Summary – a one page abstract
  o Narrative
    - specific nature of the project
    - significance of the project (creative, professional, teaching, etc.)
    - relationship of the project to the work of other scholars in the field
    - work plan: indicating how project will proceed and when it will be completed
    - proposed outcome (i.e., publication, presentation, etc.)

• Specific Criteria for Evaluation
  o Significance of the study for scholarship and/or teaching in the field and in the applicant’s teaching
  o Probability that the proposed project will be completed (measured by design, work plan, and estimate of time required to complete the project)
  o Probability of dissemination to the field or college community (i.e., publication, presentation, etc.)

c. Application Procedures
• A written proposal is submitted to the chair of the Elections and Professional Development Committee (7 copies).
• Committee Action. The Committee may either a) reject, b) approve, c) request more information, d) recommend amount of money.
• The Committee makes its recommendation to the EVP/DAA.
• The EVP/DAA makes the final decision.