

Recommended Change to Dependent/Spouse Tuition Grant Policy

Endorsed by

Faculty Salary and Benefits Committee	November 19, 2020
Faculty Senate Professional Staff Affairs Committee	November 20, 2020
Faculty Senate Faculty Affairs Committee	November 24, 2020
Faculty Senate	December 8, 2020

Summary

The Dependent/Spouse Tuition Grant benefit is offered only to regular employees, according to current policy. Employees in term positions may have worked for the university for decades, in almost identical jobs as their regular co-workers, yet all term employees are excluded from the benefit. This discrepancy causes conflicts and hurts morale.

For years, Faculty Senate has made efforts to expand this benefit to term employees, but administration has rejected these efforts due to the additional cost and budget concerns.

This proposal calls for administration to change this policy and allow term employees to also receive this benefit. As this policy is controlled by administration, four policies are provided and all extend benefits equally between regular and term employees. Groups endorsing this document prefer any of these four policies to the current policy. However, these groups prefer two of these policies as indicated. To help administration decide which policy is best for K-State, each policy has the estimated impact compared to the current policy. The efforts of the Institutional Research Office has been greatly appreciated in providing accurate numbers of employees and are reflective of employment data on 11/16/2020.

Here are some of the primary benefits of offering dependent tuition to term employees.

Undergraduate recipients must enroll in at least 12 hours to receive the 7 hour benefit. Thus, every recipient pays at least 5 hours of tuition to the university. That is, the student credit hours increase by at least 12 hours and the university pays for only 7 of the hours each semester. The student also pays at least 12 hours of the respective fees.

Term employees are stable employees and there are about 350 term employees that have been at K-State for over 7 years and 450 that have been here at least 5 years.

We believe that expanding this benefit will help with recruitment and retention of both staff and students.

Not providing this benefit to all K-State employees seriously hurts morale.

Preferred Options

All the endorsing entities prefer either of the following two policies. These policies align with offerings at other institutions.

Provide the dependent tuition benefit to any regular or term employee.

Provide the benefit to any regular or term employee who has been employed for at least one year.

Eligible Employees

Current Policy	All employees	All employees after one year of employment
3,138 eligible	4,222 eligible	3,907 eligible
0% increase	34.5% increase in eligible employees	24.5% increase in eligible employees

In the event that administration does not wish to expand this benefit, then the endorsing groups recommend that administration adopts one of the following two options. These options leave nearly the same number of cumulative benefits offered to the university faculty and staff.

Delayed Benefit for all Employees

Any regular or term employee is eligible to receive the dependent/spouse tuition benefit upon completing 3 years of continuous employment.

Eligible Employees

Current Policy	All term and regular employees that have completed at least three years of employment
3,138 eligible	3,225 eligible
0% increase	2.7% increase in eligible employees

Graduated Benefit Based upon Time

Any regular or term employee is eligible to receive 3 hours of dependent/spouse tuition upon completing one year of service. Upon completing five years of continuous employment, the benefit increases to 7 hours of dependent/spouse tuition.

Maximum Eligible Student Credit Hours

Current Policy Maximum Student Credit Hours Benefit	Graduated Benefit Maximum Student Credit Hours Benefit
$3,138 * 7 = 21,966$	$1,221 * 3 + 2,686 * 7 = 22,465$
0% increase	2.2% increase in eligible student credit hours

Implementation Suggestions

It is recommend that this policy begin in the Fall 2021 semester. This allows time for the university to inform employees, adjust forms and procedures. Students also have time to prepare for the financial change. Administration should grandfather in any existing recipients that may be losing some benefit.

To provide additional funding, the university may wish to follow other universities and change this to a scholarship program. The K-State Foundation may be able to cover some or all of the expense as scholarships. If this were the case, university funds would no longer be spent for this purpose.

Current Policy

Employee Definition:

An employee must carry a full time (0.9 FTE or above), benefits eligible, regular (non-term) appointment with Kansas State University throughout the full academic year and is in one of the following categories:

Faculty member, which includes all individuals with academic rank as defined in the University Handbook.

Unclassified professional employee, which includes all individuals who do not hold academic rank and do not have a civil service classification.

University Support Staff employee, which includes all individuals who have a State of Kansas Civil Service classification.

Regular appointments include all classified and unclassified appointments who are not designated as term. The University Handbook includes the following definition of a term appointment: "Normally, a term appointment is used only when the need or the funding for a position is finite and is for a specified term no longer than one year. A term appointment carries no expectation of continued employment beyond the period stated in the contract. Service on a term appointment is not credited toward tenure. The Standards for Notice of Non-Reappointment do not apply."

Dependents and spouses of full-time employees (at least .9 FTE) with regular (non-term) appointments and deceased employees who were employed full time at their death, are eligible for the Dependent/Spouse Grant.

There is no service requirement for the employee to be eligible for this program.

Employees of affiliated organizations (e.g., Alumni Association, Athletics, Foundation, KSURF, Student Publications, Student Union, etc.) are not eligible for the K-State Dependent/Spouse Grant Program.

Award Amounts

For Dependents or Spouses that are enrolled full-time in a degree terminating undergraduate program, the award will be the equivalent of the regular, resident on-campus tuition rate for 7 undergraduate course credits, where full-time for an undergraduate is defined as at least 12 enrolled credit hours per regular fall/spring term.

For Spouses that are enrolled part-time in a degree terminating undergraduate program the maximum award will be the equivalent of the regular, resident on-campus tuition rate for 3 undergraduate course credits, where part-time for an undergraduate is defined as less than 12 enrolled credit hours per regular fall/spring term. (Enrollment of less than 3 credit hours, will result in the proration of the award i.e. 2 credit hours enrolled = the equivalent of the regular, resident on-campus tuition rate for 2 credit hours - or - 1 credit hour enrolled = the equivalent of the regular, resident on-campus tuition rate for 1 credit hour.)

Dependents that are enrolled less than full-time in an undergraduate program are not eligible for the K-State Dependent/Spouse Grant.

For Dependents or Spouses that are enrolled in a degree terminating graduate or veterinary medicine program the maximum award will be the equivalent of the regular, resident on-campus tuition rate for 3 course credit hours as indicated by the student's degree program, graduate or veterinary medicine. (Enrollment of less than 3 credit hours, will result in the proration of the award i.e. 2 credit hours enrolled = the equivalent of the regular, resident on-campus tuition rate for 2 credit hours - or - 1 credit hour enrolled = the equivalent of the regular, resident on-campus tuition rate for 1 credit hour.)

Recommended Changes to Current Policy

(All four options are presented here)

Employee Definition:

(Select one of the following three paragraphs or the change the wording in Award Amounts)

(All employees)

An employee must carry a full time (0.9 FTE or above), benefits eligible, appointment with Kansas State University throughout the full academic year. The employee must be in one of the following categories:

(All employees with one year delay)

An employee must carry a full time (0.9 FTE or above), benefits eligible, appointment with Kansas State University throughout the full academic year. The employee must have completed at least one year of full time employment and be in one of the following categories:

(All employees with three year delay)

An employee must carry a full time (0.9 FTE or above), benefits eligible, appointment with Kansas State University throughout the full academic year. The employee must have completed at least three years of full time employment and be in one of the following categories:

Faculty member, which includes all individuals with academic rank as defined in the University Handbook.

Unclassified professional employee, which includes all individuals who do not hold academic rank and do not have a civil service classification.

University Support Staff employee, which includes all individuals who have a State of Kansas Civil Service classification.

Individuals on university approved leaves or reduced appointment, such as medical leave of absence, phased retirement, sabbaticals, etc., may not satisfy the (0.9 FTE) during the time of reduced appointment, but are still considered eligible for this benefit. Additionally, any year in which the employee serves in such a capacity is considered as a qualifying consecutive year of employment at K-State.

The dependents and spouses of deceased employees are eligible for this benefit as long as the deceased employee was eligible for this benefit at the time of death.

Employees of affiliated organizations (e.g., Alumni Association, Athletics, Foundation, KSURF, Student Publications, Student Union, etc.) are not eligible for the K-State Dependent/Spouse Grant Program.

Award Amounts (Select one of the first two paragraphs)

For dependents or spouses of eligible employees that are enrolled full-time in a degree terminating undergraduate program, the award will be the equivalent of the regular, resident on-campus tuition rate for 7 undergraduate course credits, where full-time for an undergraduate is defined as at least 12 enrolled credit hours per regular fall/spring term.

For dependents or spouses of eligible employees that are enrolled full-time in a degree terminating undergraduate program, where full-time for an undergraduate is defined as at least

12 enrolled credit hours per regular fall/spring term, the award will be the equivalent of the regular, resident on-campus tuition rate for 3 undergraduate course credits for employees that have completed one year of employment and 7 undergraduate course credits for employees that have completed five years of continuous employment.

For eligible employee spouses that are enrolled part-time in a degree terminating undergraduate program the maximum award will be the equivalent of the regular, resident on-campus tuition rate for 3 undergraduate course credits, where part-time for an undergraduate is defined as less than 12 enrolled credit hours per regular fall/spring term. (Enrollment of less than 3 credit hours, will result in the proration of the award i.e. 2 credit hours enrolled = the equivalent of the regular, resident on-campus tuition rate for 2 credit hours - or - 1 credit hour enrolled = the equivalent of the regular, resident on-campus tuition rate for 1 credit hour.)

Dependents that are enrolled less than full-time in an undergraduate program are not eligible for the K-State Dependent/Spouse Grant.

For dependents or spouses of eligible employees that are enrolled in a degree terminating graduate or veterinary medicine program the maximum award will be the equivalent of the regular, resident on-campus tuition rate for 3 course credit hours as indicated by the student's degree program, graduate or veterinary medicine. (Enrollment of less than 3 credit hours, will result in the proration of the award i.e. 2 credit hours enrolled = the equivalent of the regular, resident on-campus tuition rate for 2 credit hours - or - 1 credit hour enrolled = the equivalent of the regular, resident on-campus tuition rate for 1 credit hour.)