

SUL ROSS STATE UNIVERSITY

A Member of the Texas State University System

SRSU Policy: Staff Development Policy

SRSU Policy ID: APM 5.14

Policy Reviewed by: Director of Human Resources

Approval Authority: Vice President for Finance and Operations

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A. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Sul Ross State University Staff Development Policy is to promote institutional and staff development by providing progressive training opportunities that support lifelong learning and assist employees in working effectively within their departments and throughout the University community.

The University encourages supervisors, managers, and employees to identify development programs that will improve job performance and develop employee potential in their current position.

Purposes that may be served by development programs include the following:

- Preparation of employees to deal with new technological and legal developments
- Development of additional work capabilities
- Increasing the employee's level of competence
- Increasing productivity

B. POLICY/PROCEDURE

It is the policy of Sul Ross State University to provide opportunities for employees to enhance job-related knowledge and behaviors and personal and professional skills that will in turn improve job performance and contribute to the long-term success of the University.

1. Employee

For purposes of this policy, an employee is defined as:

- a. Regular employee: A benefits eligible, non-student employee employed to work 50 percent FTE (20 hours per week for a period of 4-1/2 months or longer).
- b. Staff Employee: An individual employed to perform a service for the University and paid through the payroll system, with accompanying

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tax withholding as provided by law, excluding those employees holding teaching and/or research positions classified as faculty and student positions.

2. Development activities at Sul Ross State University include:
 - a. Human Resources Development Programs provided on the University campus, including training on mandated compliance issues related to affirmative action; specifically, EEO, sexual harassment, and other related issues.
 - b. Opportunities (seminars, short courses, workshops) held off campus by outside vendors for a fee.
 - c. Other opportunities on Sul Ross campus:
 1. Administrative or technical training offered at no cost to University employees
 2. University courses
 3. Other training offered by University departments
 - d. Opportunities provided by other state or federal agencies related to specific issues, topics, or concerns.
3. Funding and Approval
 - a. The State Employee Training Act allows Sul Ross State University to use public funds for development training related to either current or prospective duty assignments. Funding for training is thus provided through the budget process.
 - b. Funds may be expended from departmental accounts for employees to participate in development programs upon supervisor and departmental approval. Travel to training will be provided following procedures outlined in the Sul Ross Administrative Policy Manual, Section 3.01 Travel Regulations.
 - c. Appropriate expenses include, but are not limited to, salary, tuition and other fees, travel expenses, training materials, and other necessary expenses.

Supervisors may require that employees attend programs as a part of their duty assignment. Employees attending such programs are not required to

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make up time spent in development sessions. Non-exempt employees shall be provided work time as determined by their supervisor for completion of the programs.

C. AVAILABLE PROGRAMS

1. Sul Ross Programs

These are programs deemed necessary by Sul Ross to carry out the mission, vision, or strategic plan of the institution and provided by Sul Ross at no cost to the employing department or the employee. These programs are either sponsored or provided by departments within Sul Ross. The programs are provided to:

- a. Fulfill state and federal requirements;
- b. Clarify Sul Ross systems, policies, and procedures;
- c. Enhance the quality, service, and productivity of the institution; or
- d. Orient employees to Sul Ross, train on University specific knowledge, behaviors, and skills for job-related duties, and to provide on-going improvement of personal and professional knowledge, behaviors, and skills.
- e. Health and Safety Issues.

2. External Programs

These are development programs authorized by the employing department for selected Employees, which are funded from department accounts, and/or where the employee is provided release time. The development program must provide job-related knowledge, behaviors, or skills for current or prospective job duties. External programs may consist of workshops, seminars, institutes, training sessions, and other special programs or activities, and include continuing education for licenses or certifications that are a required qualification of the position.

3. Extended Development Programs

An extended development program is one which is paid for by Sul Ross or during which the employee's salary is continued, and where the employee does not perform regularly assigned job duties for three months or more.

Extended Development Programs:

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- a. Do not include training required by state or federal law
- b. Must be approved by the appropriate supervisor, Vice President, and President
- c. Require the employee to at a minimum work for Sul Ross following the development program for at least one month for each month of the development period or repay Sul Ross for all costs associated with the development program, including any amounts of the employee's salary that were paid and were not accounted for by paid vacation or compensatory leave
- d. Shall require the employee to agree in writing (Attachment A - Employee Extended Development Agreement) to comply with the above requirements before the development program begins
- e. Permit the President or his designee to waive the requirements prescribed in subsection (c) and release the employee from the obligation if such action is in the best interest of Sul Ross or is warranted because of extreme personal hardship suffered by the employee
- f. Provide that if an employee does not complete the services required, provides those services for less than the required term, or fails to make payments as required - and the employee is not released from his or her obligations - then the employee is liable to Sul Ross for any costs and reasonable expenses incurred in obtaining payment

Each year Sul Ross State University will submit an annual report to the Legislative Budget Board, which details the amount of money expended for Extended Development Programs in the preceding fiscal year.

4. Development through Sul Ross State University Classes
 - a. A supervisor and/or department head may require the employee to participate in University classes to improve job performance and develop the employee's potential in their current or prospective role. The request must be approved by the appropriate Vice President and President.

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- b. Class time for University courses approved as employee training will count as time worked.
 - c. Cost of tuition, fees and books will be paid by the University.
 - d. The employee must complete the regular admission processes and meet the relevant admission requirements.
 - e. A per week maximum of two classes each long semester or six semester credit hours and one class each summer session or three semester credit hours per week during the employee's regular work schedule may be allowed for paid class attendance during regularly scheduled class meetings.
 - f. The employee's primary responsibility is to his/her job. An approved application represents a department's commitment to release time for course attendance. The employee is obligated to his/her job responsibilities during the work hours when the course is not in session.
 - g. The employee is required to furnish proof of enrollment and satisfactory completion of the course with a grade of "C" or better. If the employee does not meet the satisfactory standard, the employee may be required to reimburse Sul Ross State University for tuition, fees and books.
5. University Employees as Students
- a. University employees may attend Sul Ross State University classes related to the duties or prospective duties of the employee or for health fitness or related education. The employee may register under this section for classes that have at least six students enrolled for undergraduate courses and three students enrolled for graduate courses when excluding other faculty, staff, or dependents taking classes under the Tuition Scholarship and Fee Waiver program. An employee who fails to complete the class successfully, obtaining a passing grade, will be required to reimburse the University the tuition scholarship and fees waived. An employee dropping a class at any time during the semester will be required to reimburse the University for the tuition and scholarship fees waived according to the University refund schedule. Undergraduate students, obtaining an "I" or incomplete would be considered satisfactory for a passing

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grade provided all of the requirements are met in accordance with the Incomplete Grade Policy. If the requirement for the class are not met within one year the “I” becomes an “F”. Graduate students enrolled in prospectus/thesis research and thesis classes obtaining a grade of “PR” for in progress or “CR” for credit would be considered satisfactory completion for a passing grade. The Registrar’s office will report employees taking classes who did not successfully complete the class to the Cashier’s office one week after final grades are due or the student withdraws or drops a class covered under this policy. The Cashier’s office will reverse the fees waived and notify the employee of the new charges and the Financial Aid office will reverse the scholarship to the employee’s accounts no later than two weeks after grades are due.

- b. The University will waive local mandatory fees for up to six semester credit hours for a long semester and three semester credit hours for mid-winter and three hours during the each summer semester for benefits eligible employees taking classes under this section excluding graduate research and teaching assistants. Fees to be waived by the University are Designated Tuition Fee, Student Service Fee, Student Center Fee, Computer Access Fee, Technology Fee, Recreational Sports Facility Fee, International Education Fee, Records Fee, Library Fee, Athletic Fee, and Medical Fee. The Recreational Sports Facility Fee will be waived for all semester credit hours taken because employees are required to join and pay an annual fee for use of the Recreational Sports Facility. Employees as students do not pay activity fees; therefore, they will not receive student ID’s.
- c. State minimum tuition will be paid by SRSU via scholarship for up to six semester credit hours for a long semester and three semester credit hours for mid-winter and three hours during the each summer semester for benefits eligible employees taking classes under this section excluding graduate research and teaching assistants.
- d. The Registration Fee Waiver and Tuition Scholarship form will be due to the Registrar’s office no later than the third business day prior to the first day of classes to receive the waiver and tuition benefit; otherwise, the employee will be responsible for the cost of tuition and fees. Employees will fill out Sections A and B of the Request for Registration Fee Waiver and Tuition Scholarship Form; attach the employee’s full class schedule from Lobo Online to the form, obtain

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supervisory approval Section C and Human Resources certification of benefits eligible employment prior to registration Section D; obtain certification from the Records and Registration office no later than three working days before the first day of classes that the classes have met the required enrollment of six students for undergraduate classes and three students for graduate classes excluding faculty, staff and dependents taking classes under the Tuition Scholarship and Fee Waiver program Section E (See Attachment B-Request for Registration Fee Waiver and Tuition Scholarship Form). The employee will present the Request for Registration Fee Waiver and Tuition Scholarship Form to the Cashier's Office for completion of Section F at the time of registration for fee waiver and tuition scholarship or after registration for reimbursement of fees paid by employee.

- e. An employee who is permitted to enroll in courses during the regular work hours must make up those hours during the work week involved on an hour-for-hour basis. The revised work schedule requires supervisory approval (see Attachment B-Request for Registration Fee Waiver and Tuition Scholarship Form Section B).
- f. A per week maximum of six semester credit hours each long semester and three semester credit hours each mid-winter and summer session during the employee's regular work schedule may be allowed for course attendance subject to the provisions of section 5d.
- g. The employee's primary responsibility is to his/her job. Course work taken on this basis is at the employee's own time and expense, except for fees waived by the University in accordance with sections b above.
- h. Supervisors are encouraged to make a good faith effort to accommodate requests for participation in University courses as long as there is not a negative impact to the department. Supervisors must ensure that the workload, hours of operation, customer service, and department function are not adversely affected. Supervisors will make the determination that the class/es will enhance or improve the employee's skills and/or ability to perform his/her job or the class/es lead to a degree related to current or prospective duties.

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If the supervisor feels that the classes requested do not meet the requirements of this policy and the employee disagrees after discussion, the employee may appeal to the appropriate Executive Cabinet member. The EC Member's decision will be final.

D. RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Supervisors and Managers

Employee development is a responsibility of every supervisor. Supervisors are responsible for:

- a. Providing employees on-the-job training in the proper performance of tasks
- b. Providing a climate in which development of employees is encouraged
- c. Integrating an employee's development needs with the goals and objectives of the department and institution;
- d. Identifying development opportunities for employee improvement which will benefit the institution
- e. Releasing the employee for the full length of the program, encouraging the employee's complete participation in the learning experience
- f. Involving the employee with the application of knowledge, behaviors, and skills as work resumes and development is complete.

2. Employees

Each employee is responsible for:

- a. Assisting in identifying opportunities for knowledge, behavior, and skill development to improve on-the-job performance
- b. Attending the full-length of the development program, and participating in all learning activities

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- c. Applying gained knowledge, behavior and skills to their current job
- d. Maximize the use of training and new knowledge received