

**FASA Update on
Proposed Course Fee Courtesy Policy Changes
for Faculty and Academic
9/24/2024**

Background: The UCFA evaluated the Course Fee Courtesy policy in spring of 2022. The philosophy behind their review was:

- the policy has not been reviewed/revised since 2002
- compensation and benefit packages in employment have changed drastically since 2002
- A stronger culture of benefits can set MSU apart from our peers for purposes of recruitment and retention, making MSU a workplace of choice. Although faculty salaries are generally at the lower end of the Big Ten in annual compensation studies, this policy can be used as a competitive tool to attract and retain faculty and academic staff
- The changes are itemized in the table below.

Request: The UCFA requested information on the costs of these changes, and whether these changes are feasible.

FASA Response:

- HR had been exploring changes to the CFC policy; Sharri Margraves discussed with the UCFA some of the issues with the policy today (e.g., 120 credit limit). The UCFA wholeheartedly endorsed Sharri's recommendation to increase the credit limit.
- Cost analyses/projections occur within HR and Finance.
- FASA discussed next steps with HR and the Office for Finance and reviewed the list of requested changes. The changes that may be feasible at this time are listed below in green as "Phase 1" items.
- FASA obtained the following cost estimates from HR and Finance in September of 2024 for Phase 1 items:

TOTAL ESTIMATED COST FOR CFC Expansion	
Incremental cost for newly eligible students	\$777,383
Incremental choice for change to 134 credit hours	\$123,023
Total Cost Using Current Utilization rate	\$900,406

- These estimates are currently being reviewed by the Provost and the EVPA and will be discussed at the executive level.
- This policy is a Board of Trustees university policy and requires BoT approval. It also impacts support staff.

Proposed Policy Changes

#	Policy Differences	Current Policy	Proposed Changes	Rationale	Outcome
1	Policy Name	Course Fee Courtesy Policy	?? Undetermined	The UCFA recommended a more apparent name such as “Tuition Benefits for Employee Dependents” (we could look at the benchmarking)	Yes: Include in Phase 1 policy change
2	Coverage	MSU-recognized same-sex domestic partners	Replace with “spouse and other eligible individual” (and remove footnote referencing a legal case).	To replace outdated language.	Yes: This is the practice, Include in Phase 1 policy change
3	The Benefit	1. Amount Off (50%) “...credit of an amount <u>equal to one-half</u> the applicable Michigan resident on-campus undergraduate course fees.”	1. Amount Off (up to 75%) “...credit of an amount up to 75% of the applicable Michigan resident on-campus course fees, directly scaled to the percentage appointment of the benefit-eligible faculty or academic staff person. ”	1) To recognize part-time appointments like other employee benefits. FAS workforce composition has changed over time and now includes more part-time employees. 2) The 75% is to become competitive with our peers. Some of our peers are providing 75% off.	Discuss further. Not included in Phase 1
		2. Amount Off “...credit of an amount equal to one-half the applicable Michigan resident on-campus undergraduate course fees.”	2. Amount Off (scaling) “...credit of an amount up to 75% of the applicable Michigan resident on-campus course fees, directly scaled to the percentage appointment of the benefit-	1) MSU provides scaled benefits for other benefits (e.g., healthcare) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full-Time:90-100% • 3/4 Time: 65-89.9% • 1/2 Time: 50-64.9% 	Discuss further. Not included in Phase 1

			eligible faculty or academic staff person.”		
	3. # of Credits (120) <u>Current Language:</u> “The course fee courtesy will be granted through the semester in which the 120th credit is attempted provided the dependent child or spouse/same-sex domestic partner is registered as a student in good academic standing at Michigan State University in a curriculum leading to the first baccalaureate degree or to a certificate in the Agricultural Technology program. For undergraduate students with transferable credits, the course fee courtesy is granted through the semester in which the combination of transferable credits and Michigan State University credits attempted equals 120.”	3. # of Credits (180) <u>Proposed Language:</u> The course fee courtesy will be granted through the semester in which the 180th credit is attempted provided the dependent child or spouse/other eligible individual is registered as a student in good academic standing at Michigan State University. This benefit can be applied towards one degree at MSU during the period of eligibility.		The UCFA endorses Sharri Margraves’ suggestion to increase the credits to 180 credits due to the following reasons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over 32 programs require more than 120 credits to earn a bachelors degree (with some requiring 180) • Transfer credits and community college credits (from HS) count against this benefit. 	Yes; Include in Phase 1; with modification that MSU will allow reimbursement up to the # of credits required for the bachelors program. Note: there are 11 programs (not 32) that require more than 120 credits, with 134 credits at the top end.
The Benefit	4. Covers bachelors degrees.	4. Expand to cover a graduate degree or a bachelor degree.		Allowing graduate degrees or bachelors degrees is highly attractive to employees, thus, becoming a competitive tool with our peer universities.	Discuss further. Not included in Phase 1

4	Employee Eligibility	The benefit is accessible only to full-time employees.	Expand access to benefits-eligible part-time employees.	To allow part-time employees to have access to this benefit, the UCFA proposes that all benefits eligible faculty/academic staff be eligible for the benefit just like they would for other employee benefits. Expansion of eligibility that promotes greater equity and inclusion across all categories of benefit-eligible employees. The FAS workforce composition has changed over time and includes more part-time employees.	Discuss further. Not included in Phase 1
4	Employee Eligibility	<u>Current Language:</u> Fixed term faculty and academic staff are eligible to utilize this benefit after 60 FTE service months.	<u>Overview of Proposed Changes:</u> ➤ Remove the 60 FTE service months for fixed term faculty and academic staff.	Removing the 60 FTE service months requirement recognizes an expansion of eligibility that promotes greater equity and inclusion across all categories of benefit-eligible employees. University values continue to guide program and policy review across the university, including those under the purview of the Office of the Provost. Those guiding values are equity and inclusion: fundamental values of the university, of the MSU 2030 Strategic Plan, and of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategic Plan. Values manifest themselves when lived out, in action and in practice. Expanding our Course Fee Courtesy program does just that; it is an action of equity and inclusion that lives out our values of equity and inclusion.	Yes: Include in Phase 1. This change will also be considered for support staff. Currently, support staff have a similar 60 FTE service month waiting period.

5	Stacking	If two employees at MSU have a child together, the benefit cannot be stacked to allow each employee to get the full realization of the benefit (e.g., free tuition for their child).	Allow stacking of benefits if both parents are employed at MSU.	This is out of alignment with other benefits provided by MSU.	Discuss further. Not included in Phase 1.
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