POLICY

Effective Date: April 26, 2016
Approved By: President Bruce Shepard

Authority: RCW 28B.15, WAC 516-60-010, RCW 42.52

POL-U1400.07 MANAGING AND REPORTING TUITION WAIVERS

This policy applies to faculty or staff involved in the awarding, processing and/or reporting of tuition waivers for the University.

Western Washington University is committed to providing access to a quality education. Tuition waivers are a vital part of the University’s enrollment planning, recruitment, and retention efforts. Awards are used to provide access to students with demonstrated financial need, to support teaching and research assistants at the graduate level, to support legislatively mandated waivers and gender equity waivers, and to attract a high quality and diverse group of students to Western.

Definitions:

Discretionary Tuition Waiver: Per RCW 28B.15.915, Western may waive all or a portion of the operating fees for any undergraduate or graduate student for any purpose (e.g. out of state recruitment) as a discretionary waiver. There is no cap for this type of waiver.

Space Available Tuition Waiver: Tuition waivers granted to special populations on a space available basis (e.g. state employees who meet eligibility requirements and provisions or seniors 60 years of age or older). Course enrollment follows registration for students paying regular tuition and fees. Space must be available in the course and participation must not result in an extra section or displacement of regular students.

State-Required Tuition Waiver: A waiver specifically mandated by state law (e.g. certain veteran categories and their family members, family members of deceased Washington state police and firefighters).

Waiver Administrators: Individuals delegated by the Vice President for Enrollment and Student Services (VPESS) to provide oversight and perform specific financial duties related to the management of tuition waivers to which they are assigned.

1. Tuition and Fees May Be Waived

Western manages three types of tuition waivers relative to enrollment goals and legislative mandates:
a) State required tuition waivers

b) Discretionary tuition waivers

c) Space available tuition waivers

Per WAC 516-60-010, “The university, for specific reasons and a general need for flexibility in the management of its resources, may choose not to award waivers to any or all students who may be eligible under the terms of the laws, or it may decide to grant partial waivers.” In addition, “tuition and fees for self-sustaining courses and programs cannot be waived.”

2. The Budget Office (tBO) Calculates Amount of Tuition Waiver Funds Available

Per RCW 28B.15.910, Western has legislative authority to waive up to ten percent of gross operating fee revenue. Calculations are to be done in accordance with limitations outlined in RCW 28B.15.910 and/or institutional agreements.

Per RCW 28B.15.915, Western may also waive all or a portion of the operating fees for any undergraduate or graduate student for any purpose (e.g. out of state recruitment) as a discretionary waiver.

3. Vice President for Enrollment and Student Services (VPESS) Serves as the University's Financial Manager for Tuition Waivers Which are Relevant to Enrollment Management Goals

The VPESS solicits waiver need requests from appropriate administrators, with the exception of space available waivers, for use in determining projections and allocations for strategic enrollment management goals.

Waiver Administrators are responsible to monitor and track appropriations assigned to them. A waiver master list that includes the names of approved Waiver Administrators and the waivers for which they have authority to award waivers is maintained by Accounting Services and is available upon request.

4. Waiver Administrators Must Maintain Written Eligibility Criteria

Waiver Administrators must:

a) Maintain written eligibility criteria for each waiver code,

b) Include minimum criteria on the Tuition Waiver Criteria Form (FRM-U1400.07A), and

c) Submit a copy of criteria for each waiver code to the Office of the VPESS.
Waiver Administrators, or designees, will review criteria and update, as necessary. Updated criteria forms must be submitted to the Office of the VPESS.

5. **Waiver Administrators Must Retain Documentation to Support Award Decisions**

Waiver Administrators are responsible to ensure waivers are awarded in compliance with the established criteria, departmental and institutional policy, relevant state laws and regulations, and Internal Revenue Service regulations.

Documentation for each award will be retained by each Waiver Administrator’s office for a period of six years after the end of the academic year for which the waiver was awarded. Documentation will be made available upon request and may also be subject for review at any time by Western’s Office of Internal Audit or the VPESS (or designee).

6. **Employees Will Adhere to Ethics in Public Service Law (RCW 42.52) to Manage Actual or Perceived Conflicts of Interest in Awarding Tuition Waivers**

No Western employee may use their position to secure special privileges or exemptions to benefit self, family, or other people with whom the employee has some type of personal connection.

No Western employee may have an interest, financial or otherwise, direct or indirect, or engage in a business transaction or professional activity, or incur an obligation of any nature that is in conflict with their official duties.

No Western employee may authorize a tuition waiver on behalf of any student with whom the employee has a close family, business, or other personal relationship. Such personal relationships must be disclosed and the waiver recommendation referred for approval by the VPESS (or other VP if a conflict exists for the VPESS).