

- 3) The telecommuting form must contain all relevant information as to duration, location, and reason for the request (specify duties).
- 4) Each request for this arrangement will require a new agreement be completed.
- 5) Recognizing that effective communication is essential for this arrangement to be successful, the following methods and times of communicating are agreed upon: Specify: who (include backup and emergency contacts), when, how often, times, how (phone, IM, email).
- 6) The employee agrees to remain accessible during designated work hours, and understands that management retains the right to modify this agreement as a result of business necessity.
- 7) Consistent with the College's expectations of information and asset Security for employees working at the office full time, telecommuting employees will be expected to ensure the protection of proprietary company, customer, and student information accessible from their home office from theft, misuse, access, and/or disclosure. Steps include, but are not limited to, use of a locked file cabinet, disk boxes and desks, regular password maintenance, and any other steps appropriate for the job and environment.

The employee must establish an appropriate work environment within his/her home for work purposes. The College will not be responsible for costs associated with initial set up of the employee's home office such as remodeling, furniture or lighting, nor will it be responsible for repairs or modifications of the home office space.

EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

Policy Statement

This policy is necessary to maintain the quality of SWC's faculty and staff. The ongoing development of personnel committed to SWC increases their readiness and ability to contribute effectively to the mission and goals of SWC. This policy is further based in the understanding that education is a primary cultural value of the Dakota people. As a Dakota centered organization, all education attained is considered to strengthen the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate and enhance the development of the Lake Traverse Reservation.

Employee development programs are offered in two forms:

1. Professional Development targets job duties related to an employee's current position;
2. Education Assistance Program, which supports broader career development.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

It is the policy of SWC to provide assistance and support to staff employees in order to improve job performance. Supervisors are encouraged to maintain an environment that facilitates employees acquiring skills and knowledge increasing job effectiveness.

All employees, regardless of status, are eligible to receive professional development. Employees may request professional development by submitting a proposal to their supervisor. Requests that are mandated by supervisors or by funding and other regulatory agencies will receive priority. New employees will be made of the PD process during faculty orientation at the beginning of each year, as well as other means such as electronic messages and hard copy postings.

Professional development is generally accomplished through on-the-job training, seminars, conferences, institutes, participation in professional and technical associations, or workshops. At SWC, employee development that targets job advancement utilizes the **Educational Assistance Program (EAP)** listed below.

Approval for Professional Development

Employees requesting professional development will complete and submit the proper form to their supervisor for approval. If the supervisor endorses the request, or wishes to mandate professional development for a staff member(s) the request form is forwarded to HR for further processing.

- If the professional development would be supported, even partially, by a grant then the PI/PD of that award **must approve** and **sign** the form to allocate the funds.
- The President, or specifically delegated representative, makes the final determination of approval.

EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The SWC's ***Educational Assistance Program*** (EAP) was initiated to increase SWC's capacity to fulfill its mission. As it may be difficult to recruit and retain new employees, there are times that it is beneficial to assist employees committed to SWC to gain additional or new skills and expertise. The intent of the EAP is assist employees to obtain the education (coursework or degree programs) that will benefit SWC in targeted areas.

Implementation of EAP should be driven by the mission and strategic planning conducted by SWC, and by the departments to meet their objectives. The Executive Committee or department heads will typically identify candidates for the EAP as they review the current and future staffing needs of various programs and departments at SWC. Employees interested in participating in EAP to gain new skills or career advancement are encouraged to inform their supervisors and HR.

Eligibility

To be eligible for this option, employees must have completed their probationary period, are not currently subject to any disciplinary action, and their performance should demonstrate a commitment to SWC. To continue receiving this benefit the employee must maintain a **minimum** Grade Point Average (**GPA**) of **2.5** on a 4.0 numerical scale. Other qualifications and eligibility requirements may be established.

Within **five (5) working days** of receiving grades for a course(s) the employee must submit a copy to HR and their supervisor. Employees receiving EAP will be required to submit a release of information waiver to the institution where they are enrolled so SWC may monitor progress and expenditures of funds provided by EAP. This form will be made available in the Human Resources office.

The coursework does not have to be directly related to an employee's position, as capacity building is the primary focus of this benefit. However, the employee must be able to demonstrate how the coursework or degree program being pursued will benefit SWC. Mandatory coursework such as the cultural competency requirements (3 credit hours in Dakota Studies or prior demonstration of Native American cultural competency) **must be** completed prior to taking courses in other areas.

Leave and Financial Support

Supervisor's prior approval is required to receive leave to attend certain educational activities. Leave will be granted **only** if it does not interfere with an employee's other duties and responsibilities. This release time is to allow an employee to attend a class or take an exam that is **scheduled** during regular work hours. It is not to provide time for the employee to study, complete coursework, or attend classes online that could be completed outside of the employee's normal workday.

Employees have the primary, including financial, responsibility for individual development. In certain cases SWC may determine that it is beneficial to support an employee's efforts when it would enhance current or future needs of SWC. Even if an **Employee Education Plan** has been approved, SWC retains the right to alter the level of support provided, or revoke the approval of EAP at any time.

Dependent on available funding, SWC will pay part or all of the tuition and standard fees for enrolling in an approved course. SWC will provide EAP support for a specific course once, unless specifically approved by the **Education Assistance Committee**. The qualified employee will be required to pay for all books, materials, and ancillary fees associated with the class. SWC may limit or deny EAP requests to attend specific institutions due to accreditation issues, high tuition rates, or other factors.

Sisseton Wahpeton College Option

This option is for employees taking courses or completing their degree at SWC. Under this option EAP is limited to a maximum of **four (4) credit hours per semester**. Course enrollment is on a space available basis. EAP will only pay for an employee to attempt a particular course one time. Subsequent attempts to complete the same course will be paid for entirely by the employee, although leave may be granted. The maximum amount of educational leave an employee can receive under this option is equivalent to hours the course is scheduled for during the regular work week.

External Institution Option

This benefit allows employees to complete courses or degree programs from other accredited institutions of higher education. Although employees have the primary responsibility for individual professional development, SWC is aware of the advantages for building capacity within its ranks. Therefore, SWC is willing to support the development of employees with a proven track record committed to the growth of SWC. Candidates may be provided assistance to pay for courses, individually or as part of a degree program, dependent on the current availability of **resources** and **relevancy** to SWC. If the EAP is approved, funds will be paid to the institution of enrollment and not directly to the employee. The maximum amount of educational leave an employee can receive under this option is **sixty (60) hours per semester**, and is subject to approval by supervisor and the **Education Assistance Committee**.

Establishing an Employee Education Plan

After reviewing a completed **Employee Education Plan** the employee's supervisor or department head will forward it to HR within **five (5) working days** with his or her recommendations. The plan is then submitted to the **Education Assistance Committee** for review. The Committee Chair, or delegated representative, will signify the Committee's support, provisional support, or disapproval of the plan. Rejected plans will be returned to employee. All endorsed plans will be submitted to the President for final approval – **exception** being a plan for the President. If there is any conflict of interest for the President, the plan will be submitted to HR to present to the Board of Trustees.

If the Committee grants provisional support, a written recommendation will be attached to the plan. The President will then make a determination of approval on the modified plan. The President may reject any plan and return it to the requesting employee for alterations and resubmission to the Committee. The supervisor of the employee receiving EAP, the HR Office, or the President may ask the Committee to review the employee's progress, at any time, to make recommendations regarding continuing EAP support. The Committee must also endorse any significant changes to the **Employee Education Plan**. The Committee's recommendations in these cases will be forwarded to the President for final determination.

Approval for the Educational Assistance Program

Employees requesting EAP will complete and submit the appropriate form to their supervisors. After receiving an application for EAP the supervisor, based on employee's prior work performance should recommend either approval or disapproval of the request. The application will then be forwarded to HR for further processing.

- HR will determine if the request is consistent with an approved **Employee Education Plan**. If it is not consistent, the request will be forwarded to the **Education Assistance Committee** for review.

- If the EAP would be supported, even partially, by grant funds then the PI/PD of that award **must approve** and **sign** the form to allocate the funds.
- The **Educational Assistance Request** form is then forwarded to President, or specifically designated representative for final determination of approval. Requests may be referred to the **Education Assistance Committee** for additional consideration.

In order to participate in the **Educational Assistance Program** employees must sign a statement that if they resign within **twelve (12) months** after receiving this assistance, they will be required to repay SWC partially or in full. This decision will be made by the Employee Assistance Committee.

INSTITUTIONAL DOWNSIZING

Policy Statement

Because of budgetary constraints, it may become necessary at some time to reduce the number of employees (downsizing) or the number of hours they work i.e. part time. Decisions in regard to this matter will be made by the President after an assessment of the situation is made and a determination is made as to what necessities are to be maintained both in human and financial resources. During lay off periods, the essential functions of the college are to be safe guarded and maintained. For this reason, some positions become more essential than others.

Procedure

The following functions are vital to the college and command a high priority in the event of severe curtailing of services and operations. At least minimum staff will be retained to maintain services. The fully-funded grant programs will continue to function as they normally would. For all other functions the following categories or adjustments to them will be used:

1. **Minimum Staffing Levels** will consist of the Administration Office of the President, Business Office, and Planning/Development Office, and the Facilities Manager.
2. **Moderate Staffing Levels** will consist of The Administrative Office of the President, the Business Office, the Planning/Development Office, the Facilities Manager, and the Vice President of Academic Affairs.
3. **Maximum Staffing Levels** consists of all available personnel on the SWC payroll, staff, faculty, and special program personnel.

After a determination is made to curtail operations, the President will decide what arrangements will be made, such as down-sizing the workforce, limiting work hours or a combination of both.

If the matter is extreme, the President shall take the matter before the Board of Trustees for consultation and decision-making.