

Standard Administrative Procedure (SAP)

31.99.01.J0.01 Employees Registering as Students

Approved: September 4, 2026

Next Scheduled Review: September 4, 2031

Procedure Summary

Texas A&M University–Victoria (A&M-Victoria) supports the professional and educational development of its employees. This Standard Administrative Procedure establishes institutional requirements governing employees who enroll in courses while employed by A&M-Victoria and supplements System Regulation 31.99.01, Employees Registering as Students.

Procedure

1. General Provisions

Employees may enroll in courses for professional development or personal educational advancement, provided that participation does not interfere with assigned duties or departmental operations.

2. Eligibility

This rule applies to full-time benefits-eligible employees of A&M–Victoria who are in good standing. For purposes of this rule, an employee is considered to be in good standing if they have no active performance improvement plans, corrective action plans, or disciplinary actions and are meeting performance expectations as reflected in their most recent performance evaluation.

3. Enrollment Limits

To ensure employees remain primarily engaged in their assigned duties, the following enrollment limits apply:

Employees may enroll in no more than six (6) total credit hours during any long semester, regardless of whether the courses are taken at Texas A&M University–Victoria or another institution of higher education. During summer or other short terms, enrollment may not exceed three (3) credit hours in aggregate during any individual or combination of five-week, eight-week or ten-week sessions.

In rare circumstances, the appropriate Vice President may approve enrollment in an additional one- to two-credit-hour course when required for the employee to maintain half-time enrollment for purposes of student loan deferment eligibility.

The six (6) credit hour maximum represents the employee's combined enrollment across all institutions during a semester and is intended to prevent a conflict of commitment with the employee's assigned duties while maintaining an appropriate balance between academic pursuits and professional responsibilities. Employees' primary responsibility remains the performance of their assigned duties and their commitment to the operational needs of A&M-Victoria and the Texas A&M University System.

Enrollment in courses during normal working hours may be permitted only in accordance with this rule and System Regulation 31.99.01. In addition, System Rule 15.99.99.M0.02, as it relates to conflict of commitment, must be followed for all related activities.

4. Educational Benefit

Eligible full-time, benefits-eligible employees may receive an educational benefit for themselves or may designate the benefit for an eligible spouse or dependent. The benefit provides enrollment in up to two courses per semester (a maximum of six credit hours) at no tuition cost, subject to annual institutional funding, available budgeted resources, and applicable Texas A&M University System and University policies. Employees serving in a probationary employment period, as established by university policy, are limited to one course (up to three credit hours) per semester until the probationary period has been successfully completed.

Participation in the educational benefit does not alter the employee's obligation to fulfill assigned job duties. Recipients must meet all University admission and academic eligibility requirements. A current Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) must be on file when required by university procedures. The educational benefit is considered a last-dollar award and will be applied after all applicable federal and state grants, waivers, exemptions, scholarships, and other tuition assistance have been applied.

Enrollment in undergraduate degree programs leading to a first degree is supported through this educational benefit. Enrollment in undergraduate or graduate coursework after completion of a first degree must be directly related to the employee's current position or field of work and should support their effectiveness in their full-time position.

5. Approved Educational Release Time During Normal Working Hours

Upon recommendation of the immediate supervisor, the unit Vice President may approve a full-time employee's request to attend a class during normal working hours when attendance does not interfere with the employee's assigned duties or the operational needs of the department.

If approved by the unit Vice President, educational release time may not exceed three (3) hours per week in any semester or summer session, which includes the contact time of the course as well as travel to/from the course location. If the course needed is more than (3) hours and pending approval by the area Vice President, the employee will use vacation leave for any time beyond (3) hours. Sick leave nor lunchtime may be used for class attendance or coursework.

Educational release time may not be used for asynchronous online courses, as these courses do not require attendance at a scheduled class meeting during work hours. Synchronous online courses will be treated the same as face-to-face courses as outlined above.

Employees may not enroll in courses scheduled during normal working hours without prior written approval from their immediate supervisor and the appropriate Vice President.

Educational release time may not be used in combination with other release times, such as Wellness Release. Educational release time cannot be used in combination with any approved external employment.

Enrollment in undergraduate degree programs leading to a first degree is supported through this educational benefit. Enrollment in undergraduate or graduate coursework after completion of a first degree must be directly related to the employee's current position or field of work and should support their effectiveness in their full-time position.

6. Courses at Other Institutions

Employees enrolling in courses at another institution of higher education remain subject to the provisions of this rule.

Coursework taken at another institution counts toward the maximum enrollment limits established in this rule. The employee has an affirmative obligation to disclose enrollment at another institution of higher education and seek approvals as outlined.

7. Use of University Time and Resources

At no time may an employee use university work time, university equipment, or other institutional resources during scheduled work hours to complete coursework, participate in online instruction, or otherwise engage in academic activities unrelated to the employee's assigned job duties.

Participation in coursework must not interfere with the performance of assigned duties or the operational needs of the University.

Related Statutes, Policies, or Requirements

31.99.01 Employees Registering as Students

Contact Office

Office of Human Resources
(361) 570-4801