Tobacco Free/Non-Smoking Policy

Answered on July 2, 2012

Dear UTSA Staff Council,

I have read the article about smoking on campus and was just curious on how that situation is going. In the article it mentions how the council will "convey information and make recommendations to President Ricardo Romo regarding staff-related interests and concerns", but there never was a follow-up to that article. I was just wondering if the policy will remain the same or if there will be changes in the near future. I understand that the article was posted in November 2011 and there haven't been any changes, but I just wanted to clarify the decision that was made. Here is the link to that article http://utsa.edu/today/2011/11/smokingsurvey.html . Thank you for your time

Currently, there is a HOP proposal to prohibit the use of any and all tobacco products in the buildings, sidewalks, parking lots, walkways and attached parking structures immediately adjacent to the structure where CPRIT project is taking place, effective August 31, 2012. Signage will be posted at the building entrances and outside areas with such designation. Once the policy has been added to the HOP, I imagine another article will go out in UTSA Today.

Moreover, President Romo and all the VP areas have put together a committee of faculty, staff, and students for recommendations on how to transition UTSA into a tobacco-free campus over the 2012-2013 year. We expect to hear more from that committee in the near future.

Employee Educational Benefit Questions

Answered on June 11, 2012

1) I am inquiring about UTSA's Employee Educational Benefit (EEB) Program and wanted to find out if this benefit only applies to undergraduate courses. I am interested in the Legal Assisting Certification and wanted to know if the EEB program applied. Please advise. Thank you.
   Answer provided by Human Resources
   It applies to undergraduate and graduate classes at UTSA. If this is a certificate program then the EEB will not apply.

2) I had a question regarding the employee education benefit program. I was wondering why the tuition benefit did not apply to staff members pursuing their PhD. At the last 3 institutions where I worked they offered at least 1 class (4 units/ 3 credit hours) of PhD coursework and registration for staff. I was looking into applying to a PhD program, but I can't afford paying for one without additional support. I was wondering if that was something the staff council was looking to do in the future. Thanks.

   Answer provided by Human Resources
Because of state and federal (internal revenue) laws, UTSA is restricted on the use of public funds for employee education. Some schools have private funding or donations that they use for this purpose and are able to have more flexibility in its use.

Answered on May 28, 2012

Does the UTSA Employee Educational Benefits program (EBB) extend to the employee's children? If not, are there any tuition (or similar) educational discounts for an employee's children? (My daughter will go to college soon. We are starting to plan ahead).

The Employee Education Benefit Program does not extend beyond a staff member to family members. Only current staff members who are benefits-eligible and have been employed with UTSA for twelve consecutive months at the beginning of the semester in which EEB will be used are eligible.

Additionally, UTSA does not really offer any programs specifically for children of staff members. Some schools offer these types of programs, but we tend to see these more in private institutions, as those schools tend to have unlimited resources.

UTSA’s awarding philosophy, along with many other state schools, is first-come, first-served. I always suggest that students begin applying for scholarships in the spring of their Junior year of high school, and strive to complete all of their scholarship and admissions applications by November 1st. Moreover, students who want to receive the maximum in funding also complete their FAFSA in January of their Senior year in high school.

Answered on June 13, 2012

Subject: Human Resources
Sick pool is available for faculty, but not for staff. Can we work to change that?

Sick Leave Pool is available to all benefits eligible employees. Please refer to HOP Chapter 4.26, Sick Leave Pool, section A “Purpose”:

Each component institution of the UT System shall establish a sick leave pool to provide a source of additional sick leave for those employees who have exhausted all accrued annual and sick leave because of a catastrophic illness or injury.

HOP Chapter 4.26 provides the following definition of Employee: a regular employee of a component institution of the University of Texas System or the University of Texas System Administration who is employed to work at least 20 hours per week for a period of at least four and one-half months, excluding students holding positions for which student status is a requirement for employment;

If the individual has specific questions or concerns about Sick Leave Pool, I encourage them to contact Leave Management at 458-7874.