

The University of Houston-Clear Lake Employee Training and Development Program 9/1/01-Approved by the Office of the Governor of Texas

PURPOSE

The University of Houston-Clear Lake (“UHCL”) is committed to fostering an environment that encourages individuals to seek opportunities for professional growth and enrichment. UHCL recognizes that the knowledge and skills necessary to perform the work of the university is continually changing.

This program is developed to establish the processes for implementation of training and development programs, including the College Release Program, in accordance with the provision of the State Employees Training Act, Texas Government Code, Chapter 656, Subchapter C and D and the University of Houston System Administrative Memorandum **02.A.26**.

Generally this program applies to training and development for all university employees and all university funds. Certain aspects of the program may be limited to regular, full-time employees or place other restrictions on attendance or the use of certain funds.

DEFINITIONS

Employee – An individual employed to perform services or duties on behalf of UHCL and paid through the payroll system, with accompanying tax withholding as provided by law. This may include staff, faculty and students. A full-time employee is an individual employed to work 100 percent FTE (40 hours per week) for a period of more than 4.5 months.

Seminars, Workshops and Conferences – Supervisors and/or heads of departments may authorize employees to take time off from regularly assigned duties to participate in seminars, workshops, or conferences of limited duration. These types of programs should be related to current job duties and responsibilities or potential future opportunities at UHCL. Supervisors or managers should determine that the seminar, workshop or conference will enhance the employee’s job performance.

College Release Program – An educational benefit that allows UHCL employees up to three (3) hours release time from work per week to attend college courses at the UHCL or at other institutions of higher education.

PROVISIONS

The university encourages supervisors, managers, and employees to identify educational, training, and development opportunities that will improve job performance and develop employee potential in their current or prospective role. Purposes that may be served by training and development opportunities include the following:

- Preparation of employees to deal with new technologies and legal developments
- Development of additional work capabilities
- Increasing the employee’s level of competence
- Increasing the employee’s opportunities for promotion within the university
- Increasing productivity

Training and Development opportunities at the UHCL include but are not limited to the following:

1. Programs offered by the UHCL Human Resources Office of Training and Development held during work hours on the university campus.
2. Training provided by the UHCL Office of Affirmative Action/EEO on mandated compliance issues related to affirmative action; specifically, EEO, sexual harassment, and other related issues.
3. Training opportunities (seminars, short courses, workshops) held off campus in the surrounding area or outside the area by outside vendors usually for a fee.
4. The College Release Program.

PROCEDURES

All university employees may participate in training and development opportunities subject to their supervisor's approval, to any eligibility restrictions that may be applied to individual courses or programs, and to availability of funds (where costs are involved).

The State Employees Training Act allows UHCL to use public funds for development programs related to either current or prospective duty assignments. Funds may be extended from departmental accounts for employees to participate in development programs upon supervisor and departmental approval. Appropriate expenses may include salary, registration fees, travel expenses, and training materials. Any reimbursement for travel expenses associated with seminars, workshops or similar training events must meet all applicable policies, rules and statutory provisions regarding travel of state employees.

Normally, training and development programs are offered during an employee's regularly scheduled work hours. Employees are encouraged to take courses at times that accommodate the departmental work schedule when available. To the extent that it is possible and practical, supervisors and managers are encouraged to allow their employees to participate in training and development programs.

Supervisors may require attendance at certain training programs as part of the employees duty assignment.

Employees attending training and development programs with the supervisor's approval are not required to make up time spent in training and development sessions.

In-House Training Programs

UHCL HR Office of Training and Development offers training programs on an on-going basis. Information is distributed to all departments and includes information related to topic, presenter, date, time and location and how to register for the program.

Departments may request training that is specific to the department. These ad hoc requests are negotiated between the supervisor or department head and the Training and Development Specialist in the HR Office of Training and Development.

Employees wishing to register for in-house programs shall receive approval of the supervisor prior to registering for the program.

When an employee finds that he/she is unable to attend the program, they should contact the Office of Training and Development and cancel the registration.

College Release Program

This program provides full-time university employees an opportunity to be granted release time from normal duties to take courses toward a degree plan at an institution of higher education.

The employee is required to go through the regular admission process and meet the relevant admission requirements of the institution.

The employee must complete an application for release time which may be obtained from the Office of Human Resources. This application must be completed and approved prior to the first day of classes. The form requires the approval of the employee's immediate supervisor, department head and the designated Human Resources representative.

A maximum of three (3) hours per week during the employee's regular work schedule may be allowed for course attendance or for travel to and from class. Time away from regular duties shall not be granted for study time.

The classroom time and travel time, not to exceed three (3) hours per week, cannot be charged against the employee. The time away from the work place to attend class will be documented on the time sheet as release time.

Supervisors are encouraged to make a good faith effort to accommodate requests for participation in the College Release Program.

Disapproval by a supervisor or department head will be noted on the application with the reason for the disapproval and the signature of the disapproving individual.

All costs associated with tuition, fees, and books are the responsibility of the employee.

The employee is required to furnish proof of enrollment prior to the first class and proof of completion of the course at the end.

English as a Second Language (ESL)

Courses providing instruction in English as a second language are offered through the HR Office of Training and Development to assist employees with limited English speaking ability an opportunity to improve proficiency in this area.

Courses are offered each semester on the UHCL campus and are at no cost to the employee.

Employees interested in registering for the course must receive prior approval of the supervisor.

Time spent in attendance in courses will not be charged against the employee and will be documented as time worked on the time sheet.

Outside Training Opportunities

Employees and departments are responsible for identifying training opportunities outside of UHCL that will enhance the employee's job performance. The UHCL Office of Training and Development may assist in identifying various opportunities.

Reimbursement for any expenses for such training and development opportunities is subject to availability of funding in the department.

Tuition Reimbursement

Full-time, benefits eligible employees of the UHCL are eligible to apply for reimbursement of tuition expenses for courses taken in pursuit of an advanced degree from an accredited institution of higher education.

Employees must submit an application for tuition reimbursement, available at the Office of Human Resources, after the employee has registered for the course and paid all applicable fees. A copy of the fee statement must accompany the application.

At the conclusion of the course, the employee will submit a copy of the grade received in order to qualify for reimbursement. Requests for reimbursement must be received in the Office of Human Resources within 30 days of receipt of grades.

Approvals of applications will be on a first-come, first-served basis and subject to available of funding.

References:

Texas Government Code, Chapter 656, Subchapter C

UH System Administrative Memorandum 02.A.26 – Employee Development and Training