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**Revision Responsibility:** Director, Human Resources  
**Responsible Executive Officer:** President

**Source/Reference:** None

## **PURPOSE**

To establish and document procedures regarding eligibility for and amount of salary increases for obtaining additional degrees.

## **POLICY**

### **I. General**

Obtaining advanced degrees by Columbia State employees is supported through the fee waiver and tuition reimbursement programs. Employees may be eligible for salary increases as a result of obtaining additional degrees. The following information establishes eligibility, and procedures, for receiving a degree-related salary increase.

### **II. Eligibility**

- A. Regular full-time and regular part-time employees are eligible for salary adjustments upon the award of a degree.
- B. Salary adjustments are not automatic and will be instituted only when the annual budget guidelines of the Tennessee Board of Regents permit such.
- C. Salary adjustments for restricted-fund employees are contingent upon available funds in the applicable restricted account, and must be approved by the supervisor in concert with the grant office and appropriate cabinet member.
- D. The degree should be applicable to the duties of the position currently held by the employee, or fulfillment of the College's mission.
- E. The degree must be obtained while employed by the College.
- F. The degree must be higher than the degree currently held by the employee.
- G. The degree must be from a regionally accredited institution.

### **III. Degree-Related Pay Increases-Administrative, Professional and Support Staff**

<u>Degree</u>	<u>Annual Pay Increase</u>
High School Diploma or GED	\$100
Associate's Degree	\$200
Bachelor's Degree	\$400
Master's Degree	\$600
Doctoral Degree	\$1,500

Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) salary guidelines will prevail. Increases will not be given if they are prohibited by the TBR guidelines in effect at the time the degree is completed.

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## PROCEDURES

- I. To establish eligibility for a degree-related salary increase, the employee must secure the approval of his or her immediate supervisor and the appropriate Vice President by completing the Certification/Degree Advancement Request form and submitting it for approval.
- II. Once the employee receives all approvals for pursuit of the degree, the employee must submit an Employee Educational Assistance Plan form (See Columbia State Policy 05:18:00 Employee Educational Assistance) for approval each year until the degree is completed.
- III. The original of the Certification/Degree Advancement Request form and the Employee Educational Assistance Plan form will be maintained in the Office of Human Resources with a copy of each to the employee.
- IV. To be considered for a salary adjustment upon completion of a degree, the employee must submit a Change in Educational Status form accompanied by an official transcript or test scores to the Office of Human Resources. After verification of their request, the Office of Human Resources will forward the appropriate information to the Payroll Office and notify the employee and supervisor. After verification is received, eligible salary adjustments will become effective the first day of the month following approval.

*Revised: September 24, 1997 (titles updated); September 29, 1997 (titles updated); February 16, 1998 (National Nursing Certificate added); May 29, 2001 (policy revised, using new policy format, to delete all references to certification increases and raise degree-related pay increase amounts); January 23, 2012 (Deleted "related to current position" requirements; detailed procedures, new policy format and updated titles); February 3, 2015 (updated to provide separate information regarding degree-related pay increases for faculty; provided additional information regarding eligibility of restricted fund employees); Revised November 2018; format updated November 2020; updated, accepted by Cabinet, approved and signed by the President March 2022.*