

ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISION	FINA Administration and Finance
POLICY NUMBER	FINA 8.03
POLICY TITLE	Tuition and Fees Reduction
SCOPE OF POLICY	University System
DATE OF REVISION	April 14, 2025
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Executive Vice President for Administration and Chief Financial Officer
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE	University Bursar

PURPOSE

The University offers partial and complete abatement of tuition for select groups of students based on state law and other clearly defined parameters.

DEFINITIONS

Abatement: Reduction in amount of tuition charged by the university. In certain cases, the reduction brings the tuition charged to the equivalent of resident tuition. The reduction of tuition is not funded with scholarships or other outside sources of funding.

Classes for Credit or Noncredit: Regularly scheduled classes, including those offered through distance education, in which an adequate number of tuition-paying students are enrolled. An Adequate number of students for the purpose of this provision, shall be consistent with institutional policy.

Full-time employment: Defined as employment that consists of at least thirty-seven and one-half (37.5) hours a week on a single job in a full-time status, with gross earnings of at least minimum wage. However, a person who works less than thirty-seven and one-half (37.5) hours a week but receives or is entitled to receive full-time employee benefits shall be employed full time if such status is verified by the employer. A person who meets the eligibility requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act must present acceptable evidence that they satisfy their prescribed employment specifications to qualify as having full time employment. (62- 605.C.1) (62-609.A.2) (62-609.A.3)

Legal resident of South Carolina: Person who is a legal resident of South Carolina and meets eligibility requirements per the [SC Code of Laws Section 59-112](#).

Non-Resident Student: Person who is not a legal resident of South Carolina.

Persons who have attained the age of sixty (60): Persons who have reached the age of sixty no later than the first day of class of the term for which the abatement is sought.

Space available basis: The upper limit of class capacity, both physical and academic, as defined by institutional policy.

Tuition: The amount charged for registering for a credit hour of instruction. Tuition will not be construed to mean any other fees, charges or cost of textbooks.

POLICY

The university is mandated by the State of South Carolina Code of Laws Title 59, [Section 111](#), and [Section 112](#), to abate a portion or all of the non-resident to resident rate differential for non-resident students who are recipients of scholarship aid. The law also mandates that the university abate part or all tuition for certain students outlined in the law.

A. Non-Resident student classifications receiving a tuition rate less than non-resident rate:

Abatement for Scholarship: The governing board of the university is authorized to adopt policies for the abatement of all or a portion of the non-resident to resident rate differential for students who are recipients of scholarship aid. The university has several non-resident rates awarded to qualifying students based on achievement. The use of tuition abatements allows the university to attract talented students and enhance the quality of education for both resident and non-resident students.

Abatement for Graduate Assistantships: In addition to receiving graduate stipends, non-resident students who are graduate assistants may have their tuition reduced for all of the non-resident to resident rate differential as defined in policy [ACAF 4.00 Graduate Assistantships](#).

B. Non-Resident Student classifications receiving the equivalent of the resident tuition rate:

1. “Military Personnel and their Dependents”: Members of the United States Armed Forces who are permanently assigned in South Carolina on active duty and their dependents are eligible to pay the equivalent of resident tuition and fees. When such personnel are transferred from the State, their dependents may continue to pay resident tuition and fees if they are continuously enrolled or transfer to an eligible institution during the term or semester, excluding summer terms, immediately following their enrollment at the previous university. In the event of a transfer, the receiving university shall verify the decision made by the student’s previous university to certify the student’s eligibility for equivalent of resident tuition rates. It is the responsibility of the transferring student to ensure that all documents required to verify both the previous and present residency decisions are provided to the institution. Members of the United States Armed Forces who are permanently assigned in South Carolina on active duty (and their dependents) may also be eligible to pay the equivalent of resident tuition and fees as long as they are continuously enrolled after their discharge from the military, provided they have demonstrated an intent to establish a permanent home in South Carolina and they have resided in South Carolina for a period of at least twelve months immediately preceding their discharge. Military personnel who are not stationed in South Carolina and/or former military personnel who intend to establish South Carolina residency must fulfill the twelve month “physical presence” requirement for them or their dependents to qualify to pay in state tuition and fees. Per State of South Carolina Code of Laws Title 59, [Section 111](#), and [Section 112](#).
2. “Faculty and Administrative Employees with Full Time Employment and their Dependents”: Full-time faculty and administrative employees of South Carolina State supported colleges and universities, and their dependents are eligible to pay resident tuition and fees. State of South Carolina Code of Laws Title 59, [Section 111](#), and [Section 112](#).

3. “Residents with Full Time Employment and their Dependents:” Persons who reside, are domiciled, and are full-time employed with an employer that is physically located in the State and who continue to work full time until they meet the twelve month requirement and their dependents are eligible to pay equivalent of resident tuition and fees, provided that they have taken steps to establish a permanent home in the State. Steps an independent person must take to establish residency in South Carolina are listed in Section 62-605 entitled (“Establishing the Requisite Intent to Become a South Carolina Domiciliary”). State of South Carolina Code of Laws Title 59, [Section 111](#), and [Section 112](#).
4. “Retired Persons and their Dependents:” Retired persons who are receiving a pension or annuity who reside in South Carolina and have been domiciled in South Carolina as prescribed in the Statute for less than a year may be eligible for equivalent of resident rates if they maintain residence and domicile in this State. Individuals on terminal leave who have established residency in South Carolina may be eligible for equivalent of resident rates even if domiciled in the State for less than one year if they present documentary evidence from their employer showing they are on terminal leave. The evidence should show beginning and ending dates for the terminal leave period and that the person will receive a pension or annuity when he/she retires. State of South Carolina Code of Laws Title 59, [Section 111](#), and [Section 112](#).
5. Veterans: A veteran who is receiving educational assistance under Chapter 30 and Chapter 33, Title 38 are entitled to pay equivalent of resident tuition and fees regardless of length of time residing in the state.
6. Sister State Agreements approved by the Board of Trustees: The university may waive the nonresident-to-resident differential of tuition for students participating in an international Sister-State agreement program which the Governor and the General Assembly have joined to promote the economic development of South Carolina.
7. Non-US Institutions: Where the university has a formal relationship in one or more degree programs with an international institution in accordance with memoranda of understanding as delineated in [ACAF 2.06 International Academic Agreements](#), and a relationship includes regular arrangements for the enrollment of qualified students and the exchange of faculty between the institutions, the university may waive the non-resident-to-resident differential for non-resident students enrolled in the program.
8. Student Exchange Programs: Qualified students enrolled in exchange programs may have the non-resident-to-resident differential waived.
9. Reciprocity Agreements: Reciprocal resident agreements exist for students from certain counties in Georgia for USC Aiken and USC Beaufort campuses only.

- a. USC Aiken: Students residing in Richmond and Columbia Counties in Georgia attending USC Aiken will be eligible to pay the equivalent of resident rates.
 - b. USC Beaufort: Students in Chatham-Effingham and Bryan Counties in Georgia attending USC Beaufort will be eligible to pay the equivalent of resident rates.
10. SC Prepaid: For the South Carolina Tuition Prepayment Program (SCTPP), the annual increase in tuition for an institution cannot exceed seven percent per year from Fiscal Year 2006-2007. To the extent that actual tuition for an institution exceeds an annual growth of seven percent per year, the university must grant a waiver of the non-resident to resident differential to the designated beneficiary and must not pass along the difference to any student. Students who were residents at the time of the SCTPP plan purchase will be eligible to pay the equivalent of resident tuition rate.
11. Academic Common Market: The Academic Common Market (ACM) is a program for students seeking certain degrees not offered by the public institutions in their state of residency/domicile. Students who are enrolled in this program are granted the equivalent of resident tuition for the specified degree as long as they remain in the approved ACM degree program. Students who change their major or program from the qualifying ACM major will be charged non-residents rates beginning term of change in major per the Southern Regional Education Board. For additional information on the Academic Common Market, see https://www.sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/provost/planning/academicprograms/acm/.

C. Student classifications receiving free tuition:

1. Scholarship for winner of Essay Contest sponsored by Governor's Committee on Employment of Physically Handicapped: The four-year scholarship shall be granted by the governing board of the university upon certification by the Governors Committee on Employment of Physically Handicapped. The scholarship shall provide free tuition and fees. The scholarship may be cancelled if a recipient does not maintain general scholastic and conduct standards established by the institution.
2. Children of Wartime Veterans: The undergraduate scholarship shall provide free tuition and shall continue so long as an applicable student's work and conduct are satisfactory to the governing body of the institution. Certain residency and age requirements apply.
3. Children of firemen, law enforcement officers and government employees totally disabled or killed in the line of duty: The four-year undergraduate scholarship provides for free tuition granted by the governing board of the university.

4. Individuals who have attained the age of sixty who are South Carolina Residents: Legal residents of South Carolina who are sixty years old or older may attend classes for credit or noncredit purposes on a space available basis without the required payment of tuition if they meet admission requirements and other standards of the university and if these persons do not work as full-time employees. Residency and other requirements apply. Program and lab fees are not waived.

PROCEDURES

The procedure for this policy provides details on the administration and management of tuition and fees reduction for the university. The procedures are located:

Residency:

https://www.sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/registrar/residency_and_citizenship/index.php

Tuition Scholarships:

https://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/undergraduate_admissions/tuition_scholarships/index.php

Employee tuition assistance:

https://www.sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/human_resources/benefits/privileges_discounts/tuition_assistance/index.php

Persons who have attained the age of sixty (60):

https://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/on_your_time/senior_citizens/index.php

RELATED UNIVERSITY, STATE, AND FEDERAL POLICIES

[ACAF 2.06 International Academic Agreements](#)

[ACAF 4.00 Graduate Assistantships](#)

[FINA 8.00 Tuition, Academic and All Other Fees](#)

[FINA 8.04 Tuition Award Program](#)

[FINA 8.06 Refund of Academic Fees](#)

[HR 1.61 Tuition Assistance](#)

[South Carolina Code of Laws 59-111](#)

[South Carolina Code of Laws 59-112](#)

[Southern Regional Education Board Academic Common Market](#)

HISTORY OF REVISIONS

DATE OF REVISION	REASON FOR REVISION
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November 1, 2006	New policy
April 14, 2016	Policy revision necessary due to changes in the law, OneCarolina project, Departmental name change and departmental reorganization.
July 05, 2019	This policy clarifies college requirements, prohibitions, and adjusts notification time for college events.
April 14, 2025	Update position titles and policy number.