



University Staff Senate

Loyola University New Orleans

Resolution approved by a two-thirds majority vote of the University Staff Senate on March 17, 2026. Sponsored by Senators Alex Bellow, Claire Gallagher, Amy Keeler, Eric Schmidt, Maya Stiles, and Dianna Whitfield; and as brought forth by Alysse Arceneaux, staff member and Staff Senate Chair.

A RESOLUTION

TO

Advocate for changes to the current Tuition Remission policy (see Exhibit I), to benefit University employees and to improve retention and morale among staff members, aligning with Loyola's Jesuit commitment to *cura personalis*, which is care for the whole person: body, mind, and spirit; and *cura apostolica*, which is care for the work.

WHEREAS, the University Staff Senate is charged with advocating for the support of University staff;

WHEREAS, Loyola encourages and promotes professional and personal development; and travel for professional development is currently only allowed if paid for from a gift account and not all University departments have available funding for professional development opportunities; thus, courses Loyola offers are of academic and/or professional value and would help serve this purpose;

WHEREAS, Tuition Remission is one of the biggest attraction and retention tools for employees, but there exist limits to its usefulness;

WHEREAS, long-time employees of the University have demonstrated their loyalty and usefulness to the University;

WHEREAS, the Tuition Remission policy states "*degree-seeking faculty or staff members are eligible to receive a 100-percent tuition remission for nine (9) undergraduate hours or six (6) graduate or professional hours in the Fall or Spring semester and six (6) hours per session in the summer*"; and employees currently utilizing Tuition Remission benefit for graduate and

professional degrees have nine (9) hours applied to their account instead of the six (6) stated in the policy; and this increases the tax liability for employees (Exhibit I);

WHEREAS, the current Tuition Remission policy does not clearly outline how the employee's taxable amount is discovered; and the employee's tax responsibility is currently applied across a minimum of six paychecks, but this is not stated in the Tuition Remission policy (see Exhibit II); and the current method of applying the employee's tax responsibility creates undue financial hardship (see Exhibit III);

WHEREAS, under IRS Section 127 Education Assistance Program, gross income of an employee does not include amounts paid or expenses incurred by the employer for educational assistance to the employee, if the assistance is furnished pursuant to an educational assistance program; and tax-free educational assistance benefits under a section 127 educational assistance program include payments for tuition, fees and similar expenses, books, supplies and equipment; and programs that exceed the \$5,250 limit per calendar year may be considered tax exempt if the program directly correlates to the employee's primary benefits-eligible position under IRS section 132(d) "working condition fringe" (see Exhibit IV);

WHEREAS, the Tuition Remission policy makes no explicit mention of scholarships in the employee section; and the Tuition Remission policy provides "*if an employee's spouse or dependent child receives a scholarship for graduate or professional tuition, the tuition remission benefit will apply to the remainder of the balance*" in the dependents of employees section; and employees with scholarships cannot currently utilize them (see Exhibit II);

WHEREAS, the University offers a variety of certificate programs (see Exhibit V); and the Tuition Remission benefit explicitly excludes these programs; and employees would benefit from the continuing education opportunities that these programs offer;

WHEREAS, the Tuition Remission policy states that "*employees may receive one undergraduate and one graduate or professional degree*" utilizing this benefit;

WHEREAS, the majority of staff employment positions at Loyola require an undergraduate degree;

WHEREAS, the Tuition Remission policy prohibits employees from taking classes during work hours but states that exceptions may be made if the degree requirement cannot be filled any other way;

WHEREAS, flexible and virtual work schedules are common post-COVID and allowable in many University departments already;

WHEREAS, supervisors know the work ethic of their employees and are able to take this into account when approving or denying a request for a class during work hours; and

WHEREAS, supervisors know, based on the area of work they oversee, if a class would be beneficial for the professional development of their employees;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED,

1. The University should convene a committee to assess Loyola's Tuition Remission Policy and the viability of the proposed changes to the Tuition Remission Policy. This committee should include members of Loyola staff, faculty, and leadership and be established by the end of May 2026.
2. The University should add language to the Tuition Remission policy that clearly outlines the steps that are used to determine an employee's tax responsibility; and that the policy be updated to clearly note that individual employees are allowed to ask for meetings with Human Resources to discuss their paychecks; and that the policy be updated to include language indicating that six (6) pay periods is the minimum number of periods from which the increased withholding will be taken; and that these policy updates be posted by the start of the Fall 2026 semester.
3. The University should allow employees using the Tuition Remission benefit for a graduate or professional degree to apply for tax-exemption under IRS section 132(d), if the program of study is being used for professional development of the employee in their current position.
4. The University should change the policy on scholarships for employees allowing them to use scholarships in the same manner as spouses and dependents such that scholarships can be stacked with the Tuition Remission; and that the Tuition Remission benefit will apply to the remaining balance, effective for the Fall 2026 semester; and if scholarships cannot be used by employees, an explanation is added to the policy as to why.
5. The University should consider covering a portion of the cost of all certificates offered by Loyola (Exhibit V) for University employees under the Tuition Remission Policy in order to increase professional development opportunities for employees, effective for the Fall 2026 semester;
6. The University creates a new benefit for Loyola employees, which would allow loyal employees who have worked at the university for 10+ years permission to acquire a third

degree at the undergraduate or graduate level using tuition remission, effective for the Fall 2026 semester; and

7. The University allows courses to be taken during regular work hours for those employees who are degree- or non-degree-seeking, if approved by their supervisor, effective for the Fall 2026 semester.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,

That upon passage, copies of this resolution be sent to Dr. Xavier A. Cole, President of Loyola University New Orleans; the Board of Trustees; Rachel Dirmann, Director of Human Resources; and the President's Cabinet.

Signed,



Alysse Arceneaux

Chair, University Staff Senate



Donna Bourgeois

Vice Chair, University Staff Senate

Exhibits

- Exhibit I: [Tuition Remission Policy](#)
- Exhibit II: [Tuition Remission Memorandum](#)
- Exhibit III: [Tuition Remission Paycheck Example](#)
- Exhibit IV: [Tulane Affidavit Of Qualification For Tuition Waiver Tax Exemption](#)
- Exhibit V: [Loyola Certificates](#)