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Institutional policies are broad in application, ensure compliance with all federal and state laws, regulations, and procedures, mandate action, and pertain to more than one department. Their purpose is to clarify and define the University's community standards, enhance efficiency and fairness, and mitigate institutional risk. Institutional policies will be kept current, reviewed, and evaluated on a regular basis, and reflect any changes in federal and state laws, regulations, and procedures, and made available to stakeholders in a timely manner.

Institutional Policies meet the following criteria:

1. It has broad institutional application;
2. It supports compliance with applicable laws, regulations, executive orders, mandates from regulatory authorities or state control agencies, and/or Converse Policies, promotes operational efficiencies and consistencies, reduces risk, and enhances the University's mission;
3. It mandates actions or constraints and contains specific expectations and procedures for compliance and
4. Pertains to more than one division or department of the university and/or may require institutional review and approval for policy issuance and changes.

Benefit Policies

Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

Policy Owner Human Resources

Responsible Office(s) Human Resources

Policy

Under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), employees may be eligible for a period of job-protected unpaid leave for certain family and medical reasons as described below. This Family Medical Leave Act Policy ("Policy") provides an overview of employees' rights and responsibilities under the FMLA as well as the University's own policies regarding the FMLA. The University has posted notices of the FMLA in University facilities and on the intranet. The information in those posters is incorporated into this policy by reference.

General Eligibility

Employees who: (1) have worked 12 months of prior service at Converse; (2) have worked at Converse at least 1,250 hours during the 12 months immediately preceding the date on which FMLA would commence; and (3) work at a location where at least 50 employees of Converse are employed (or where at least 50 employees are employed within a 75 mile radius) are eligible for unpaid FMLA. Eligibility will be determined as of the date the FMLA leave commences. When a request for FMLA leave is made, the University will inform the employee of their eligibility and the associated rights and responsibilities.

Circumstances of Family and Medical Leave

Parental Leave – Leave needed by the employee in connection with the birth of the employee's child and to bond with the child; or for placement through adoption or foster care and to bond with the newly-placed child. Parental leave must be concluded no later than 12 months after the birth or placement of the child with the employee.

Serious Family Illness Leave – Leave needed by the employee in order to care for a spouse, child (under 18 years old, or 18 and over and incapable of self-care because of a disability), or parent who has a serious health condition (as defined below and/or by law).

Serious Personal Illness Leave – Leave needed by the employee because of a serious health condition that renders the employee unable to perform the essential functions of their job.

Qualifying Military Exigency Leave – Leave needed by the employee because of a qualifying military exigency related to active duty, or a call to active duty status of the employee's spouse, child, or parent who is or will be deployed to a foreign country.

Service Member Family Leave – Leave needed by the employee to care for a spouse, child, parent or next-of-kin (nearest blood relative of the service member) who is a member or veteran of the Armed Forces (including a member of the National Guard or Reserves and those on the temporary disability or retired list) who has a serious injury or illness or who has a pre-existing condition that was aggravated by service where the conditions was incurred in the line of duty while on active duty for which they are: (1) undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy; (2) otherwise in outpatient status; or (3) otherwise on the temporary disability retired list.

If the spouse, child, parent, or next-of-kin (nearest blood relative of the service member) is a veteran who meets the prior requirements, then leave is allowed if such family member was a member of the Armed Forces (including a member of the National Guard or Reserves) any time during the five-year period preceding the date on which the veteran undergoes such medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy.

Definitions

Serious Health Condition: A serious health condition is an illness, injury, impairment or physical or mental condition which involves either an overnight stay in a medical care facility, or continuing treatment by a health care provider for a condition which either prevents the employee from performing the functions of the employee's job, or prevents the qualified family member from participating in school or other daily activities. Subject to certain conditions, the continuing treatment requirement may be met by a period of incapacity of more than three (3) consecutive calendar days combined with at least two visits to a health care provider or one visit and a regimen of continuing treatment, or incapacity due to pregnancy, or incapacity due to a chronic condition. Other conditions may meet the definition of a serious health condition.

An employee's on-the-job injury may also qualify as a serious health condition. In this instance, the University will designate the leave of absence due to an on-the-job injury as FMLA. The leave of absence will begin to run from the beginning of the absence caused by the on-the-job injury and will run simultaneously with any workers' compensation benefits that may also be provided to the employee. Employees may also qualify for paid leave benefits while on FMLA. Although an employee may receive paid leave benefits, the leave is still considered and counted as FMLA.

Qualifying Exigencies: Qualifying exigencies for FMLA may include: (1) short-notice deployment; (2) military events and related activities; (3) non-routine childcare and school activities; (4) care of the covered service member's parent if the parent is incapable of self-care; (5) non-routine financial and legal arrangements; (6) related counseling; (7) rest and recuperation; (8) post-deployment activities; and (9) additional qualifying activities.

Covered Service Member: A covered Service Member is a current member of the Armed Forces, including a member of the National Guard or Reserves, who has a serious injury or

illness incurred in the line of duty on active duty which may render the service member medically unfit to perform their duties for which they are undergoing medical treatment, recuperation or therapy; or are in outpatient status; or are on the military's temporary disability retired list.

Duration of Leave

In General – Except in cases of Service Member Family Leave, eligible employees are entitled to a total of 12 weeks of FMLA during any "rolling backward" 12-month period (measured backward from the date the FMLA sought by the employee would begin).

Service Member Family Leave – Eligible employees are entitled to a total of 26 weeks of leave in a single 12-month period. This 12-month period begins on the first day an eligible employee takes FMLA to care for a covered service member and ends 12 months after that date. No employee may take a total of more than 26 weeks of all FMLA types of leave in a single 12-month period. Service Member Family Leave applies on a per-covered service member, per-injury basis, so that an employee may be eligible to take more than one 26-week period of Service Member Family Leave, but no more than 26 weeks of leave may be taken during any one 12-month period.

Married Employee Couples – In cases where both the husband and wife work for the University, they will be eligible for a combined total of 12 weeks of FMLA for the birth or placement of a child, or to care for a parent with a serious health condition (not parent-in-law). Similarly, if both husband and wife work for the University, they will be eligible for a combined total of 26 weeks of leave for Service member Family Leave or for Service member Family Leave combined with any other type of FMLA.

Intermittent Leave or Reduced Work Schedule Leave – Qualifying Military Exigency Leave may be taken intermittently, in separate blocks of time (no less than one hour), or on the basis of a reduced leave schedule under which an employee's usual working hours each day or each week are reduced. When medically necessary, other types of FMLA may also be taken intermittently, in separate blocks of time (no less than one hour), or on the basis of a reduced leave schedule under which an employee's usual working hours each day or each week are reduced. The University does not grant intermittent leave or a reduced leave schedule as FMLA leave for the birth or placement of a child.

In some instances, the University may require employees taking foreseeable intermittent or reduced schedule leaves to transfer temporarily to an alternative position for which the employee is qualified and which better accommodates the employee's leave schedule. Pay and shifts would not be affected by a change to an alternate position. Time worked in the alternate position would not count towards the employee's FMLA leave entitlement.

Requests for and Approval of Leave

Notice and Scheduling of Leave - Employees must provide the Human Resources Department with at least thirty (30) days' notice whenever the need for leave is foreseeable (such as when the leave is for an expected birth, placement for adoption, or planned medical treatment). For planned medical treatment, employees must consult with their Department manager and make reasonable efforts to schedule the treatment so as to minimize the impact of the employee's absence on the University's operations and fellow employees. In cases where the need for leave cannot be anticipated more than thirty (30) days in advance, the employee must provide notice of the need for leave as soon as practicable. Failure to provide proper notice of the need for FMLA may result in a delay in the commencement of leave. It may result in absences being counted against the employee for attendance and/or disciplinary action purposes, up to and including termination of employment.

Employees are also expected to comply with the University's or their department's normal call-in procedures when reporting absences, including, but not limited to, absences that the FMLA covers. Failure to follow normal call-in procedures can result in discipline, just as with any other type of leave.

Employees must also inform the University if the requested leave is for a reason for which FMLA leave has been previously taken or certified.

Employees are also required to contact their managers every 30 days during an approved FMLA leave.

Documentation - The University requires that employees provide documentation to support the need for FMLA leave. Employees may request these documents from the Human Resources Department. FMLA for a serious health condition requires the employee to submit a completed healthcare provider certification within 15

calendar days. For Service Member Family Leave requests, invitational travel orders (ITOs) or invitational travel authorizations (ITAs) issued by the Department of Defense are acceptable.

Failure to provide the required medical certifications may result in the denial of FMLA or other leave, automatic redesignation of the leave as other than FMLA, or treatment of the absence in accordance with the attendance and disciplinary policy, up to and including termination from employment. Absences counted against the employee for a late certification will not be reversed unless there are exceptional circumstances. If an employee fails to return the completed form, the FMLA will be denied, and the absences will be unprotected. If the certification form is incomplete or insufficient, the employee will be given written notification of the required information and will be given a seven (7) day period to provide the necessary information.

In the case of Qualifying Military Exigency Leave, a copy of the family member's active duty orders and documentation of the qualifying exigency will be required.

Eligibility Notice - The University will generally notify employees of their eligibility to take FMLA Leave. If employees are not eligible, they will be informed of the reason.

Designation Notice - Once the University determines whether an employee's leave qualifies as FMLA, the University will notify the employee of the determination with a Designation Notice.

Recertification - The University may request medical recertification of the condition in accordance with the FMLA statute or regulations. The University may also provide the employee's healthcare provider with information about the employee's attendance and ask the provider to evaluate whether that attendance pattern is consistent with the need to be absent due to the condition in question.

Second and Third Opinions - The University may also require the employee to obtain a second opinion and a third opinion as to the medical condition. The University will inform the employee if such a requirement exists and will provide a reasonable amount of time for the opinion to be obtained.

Benefit Participation While On Leave

An employee on approved Family and Medical Leave may continue group health insurance coverage during the leave by paying the employee's normal share of the cost of such coverage during the leave on or before the date when payroll deductions for such expenses would normally be made. If payment is not received on the due date or within the specified timeframe, the University will provide the employee with written notice of non-payment and allow 15 days to make the payment. If the payment is not made within the 15-day window and at least 30 days have passed from the due date, coverage under the benefit plan will lapse, retroactive to the original due date.

Use of Available Paid Time Off

Employees must concurrently exhaust any available paid time off (such as vacation or personal time off), short-term disability benefits, workers' compensation benefits, or any other applicable form of paid leave during FMLA leave. All substituted paid leave that is being concurrently exhausted will be counted against an eligible employee's FMLA leave entitlement.

- ***Faculty - to receive salary continuance for the time period stated on medical certification, employees must be on approved FMLA (Parental Leave, Serious Health Condition Self/Family, Military Exigency), and also use short-term disability***

****** Please note FMLA can be up to 12 weeks; pay is dependent upon medical certification; therefore, some of the time may be unpaid. Please consult with HR.***

- ***Staff - accrued vacation or personal leave, and short-term disability***

Short-term disability (STD) is provided by Hartford Insurance to both Faculty and Staff through the self-filing claim process.

FMLA forms and Short-term disability (STD) information are available through the Human Resources Office.

Crediting of Benefits While On Leave

Benefits such as sick pay and vacation do not accrue for employees who are out on unpaid leave. Similarly, employees do not receive holiday pay for holidays that occur while they are on unpaid leave, and holiday time is counted toward their FMLA leave time.

Reinstatement Following Leave

Request for Reinstatement – FMLA leave must be used for its intended purpose. If Converse determines that the employee provided false information in order to obtain the leave, or is using leave when such leave is not or is no longer medically necessary or otherwise unnecessary, the employee may be subject to discipline, up to and including termination. If the qualifying reason for taking leave ends, then the employee must immediately contact the University and make arrangements to return to work. An employee returning from FMLA for their own serious health condition should notify their supervisor of availability immediately upon being released to return to work by the employee's health care provider. Employees returning from FMLA leave must be able to assume all of the essential functions of their jobs upon return. The University will provide time for employees to learn about any changes or new technology implementations. Unless required otherwise by law, an employee granted a leave of absence under these provisions who fails to return to work upon expiration of the leave will no longer have protected absences. Further absences would count against the attendance policy. As a condition of restoring an employee whose leave is based on the employee's own serious health condition, the employee must provide the University with certification from the employee's health care provider confirming the employee's fitness to return to their normal duties or the health care provider must identify any specific limitations placed on the employee related to the performance of their job duties. Failure to provide a requested fitness-for-duty certification may result in the denial of reinstatement until this certification is provided. An employee desiring to return from FMLA leave prior to the date the leave was due to expire, must also give written notice to their supervisor of the desire to return to work at least two (2) working days prior to the desired return date.

Reinstatement – An employee returning from FMLA will normally be reinstated to the position held by the employee at the time the leave commenced or to an equivalent position; however, an employee returning from FMLA leave will have no greater right to employment or reinstatement to a specific position than an employee who had been continuously employed. For example, if an employee's position is eliminated due to a reduction in force, then no reinstatement right exists.

Related Resources

[Your Rights Under FMLA](#)
[Short-term Disability Benefit Eligible Employees](#)
[current/title-29/subtitle-B/chapter-V/subchapter-C/part-825](#)

Version History

Sun, 08/13/2023 - 22:01

Clarification on the approved FMLA, parental leave, and FMLA leave: FMLA leave allows the use of salary continuation with short-term disability (faculty), accrued available leave (Staff), and short-term disability.

Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA)

Policy Owner Human Resources

Responsible Office(s) Human Resources

Policy

Flexible Spending Accounts allow you to pay for goods and services you already use (including OTC products) with money deducted from your paycheck before it is taxed. This can reduce your eligible health care and dependent care expenses by as much as 30%. These plans are administered by Flores.

Substantial tax savings are available to eligible employees through Section 125 of the Internal Revenue Code. These “125” or “cafeteria” plans allow employees to pay premiums for most employer-approved group benefits on a pre-tax basis. Furthermore, through flexible spending accounts, employees may set aside dollars on a pre-tax basis to fund expenses such as unreimbursable medical expenses and child care expenses. These dollars must not exceed the predetermined plan limits.

- **Premiums:** Most employer-sponsored group benefits would qualify for this pre-tax treatment. Examples would be your portion of medical, dental, or group term life insurance premiums.
- **Unreimbursable Medical Expenses:** Medical expenses that are not reimbursed or covered under your group benefits plan would generally qualify for the provision. Examples are deductibles, coinsurance amounts, vision care, dental and orthodontic expenses.

This benefit requires some planning on the part of the employee because you can only qualify for

the amount you choose to set aside at the beginning of the year. Further, you may rollover up to \$570 from one year to the next if you do not use the expenses. This enables you to avoid the “use it or lose it” rule for unspent balances up to \$570. Rollover funds will be available after April 1st once all claims from the prior year are posted.

Dependent Care: An employee could choose to have pre-determined dependent care expenses withheld from his/her pay on a pre-tax basis. These expenses must be documented and filed for reimbursement as well.

Under Section 125 of the Internal Revenue Code, these elections (any or all) will be made at the beginning of a year. Changes are allowed only if the employee experiences a “change in status,” which are changes in:

- Legal Marital Status
- Number of Dependents
- Employment Status
- Work Schedule
- Residence or Work Site
- Dependent Status

Employees who have questions regarding this program or who choose to participate in this program or make changes in their election should contact the Human Resources Department. If there is any conflict between this document and the Plan Document, the Plan Document’s terms shall control.

Version History

Sun, 08/13/2023 - 22:05

Medical Insurance Surcharge for the use of Tobacco Products Policy

Policy Owner Human Resources

Responsible Office(s) Human Resources

Policy

As part of Converse University’s efforts to support the overall health and wellness of its group health plan members, Converse University will implement a tobacco surcharge to encourage the cessation of tobacco products and the overall health of our employees. Effective October 1, 2020, Converse University will charge an additional \$50 per month for medical coverage

through the Converse University Group Health Plan to its employees and their insured family members who use tobacco products. This initial surcharge may be adjusted as needed each year.

All subscribing Group Health Plan members will be required to submit a declaration with regard to themselves and all of their covered family member(s) regardless of whether they use tobacco or not. Plan members who use tobacco will see the surcharge deduction reflected in their October paycheck.

“Tobacco and smoking products” include all tobacco-derived or containing products, including, but not limited to, cigarettes (e.g., clove, bidis, kreteks), electronic cigarettes (Juuls, etc.), vaping devices, cigars, and cigarillos, pipes, water pipes, smokeless tobacco products or substitutions (spit and spit-less, chew, pouches, snuff) or any other device intended to simulate smoked tobacco. This does not apply to nicotine replacement therapy, which is designed to assist tobacco users in quitting tobacco.

If it is unreasonably difficult for the employee or insured family member(s) who uses tobacco products to stop, the employee or insured family member(s) may be able to avoid the surcharge by another means. The employee or insured family members should contact the Office of Human Resources hr@converse.edu, who will provide information regarding alternative wellness programs. Converse University generally will allow twelve consecutive weeks to complete an approved program. If Converse does not receive a certificate of completion (or acceptable evidence that the employee or insured family member(s) are still actively insured in the program) within twelve consecutive weeks, the institution will reinstate the surcharge.

Converse University reserves the right to impose the surcharge retroactively if it finds that an employee or insured family member(s) did not actively participate in an approved program (even if he or she enrolled in the program) or used tobacco products when he or she was represented to be tobacco-free.

Liability for the surcharge

The liability for the surcharge will be reevaluated each year. If an employee or insured family member(s) paid the surcharge during the previous year, the employee would continue

doing so unless, prior to the policy anniversary, he or she certifies the employee and all insured family member(s) are now tobacco-free.

“Employees who smoke or use other tobacco products may still qualify for the lower premium rates for the entire plan year by satisfying a reasonable alternative standard. Please contact HR for information regarding a reasonable alternative standard. Recommendations of an individual's personal physician will be accommodated.”

Related Resources

<https://www.cancer.org/cancer/risk-prevention/tobacco/empowered-to-quit.html>

Definitions and Acronyms

Tobacco-free is defined as the employee or insured family member(s) have not used tobacco products within the past 60 days from the day the declaration is signed or completion of a tobacco cessation program.

Version History

Sun, 08/13/2023 - 22:05

Removal of Teladoc Cessation program.

Retiree Insurance

Policy Owner Human Resources

Responsible Office(s) Human Resources

Policy

Effective December 1, 2003, the requirements for retiree participation in the Converse University group medical insurance plan are as follows:

The individual must be a retired employee who has obtained the age of 62 or more and has a minimum of ten years of service with Converse University or whose age plus the number of years of service is equal to or greater than 85. Once the retiree becomes eligible for Medicare, the group medical plan coverage terminates for the retiree and any covered dependents. When a dependent of a retiree becomes eligible for Medicare before the retired employee does, the group health plan coverage shall terminate for that dependent.

NOTE: This retiree plan is in lieu of COBRA coverage. If the employee elects the retiree coverage at the time of or before the retirement date (to include their dependents), their rights to COBRA (when their coverage ends) are null and

void. Retired employees and their covered dependents are only eligible for medical benefits, not dental or vision.

Effective May 1, 2009, Special Retirees may elect to continue medical coverage under the Plan in lieu of COBRA continuation coverage until the Special Retiree reaches the age of 65. A Special Retiree is defined as an eligible employee and offered an early retirement plan or phased retirement plan option by the University and who timely accepted an early retirement plan or phased retirement plan option and timely executed an Early or Phased Retirement Incentive Agreement and Release in Full. A Dependent of the Special Retiree who was covered under the Plan as of the date of the Special Retiree's retirement is also eligible to continue medical coverage under this Plan until the Special Retiree reaches age 65 if the Dependent elects to continue medical coverage under the Plan in lieu of COBRA continuation coverage. A Special Retiree and Dependent of a Special Retiree are only eligible for medical benefits under this Plan and not dental or vision benefits. If the Special Retiree dies before attaining age 65, the Special Retiree's Dependent may continue medical coverage under the Plan until the date the Special Retiree would have attained age 65. In the event of a divorce or a legal separation, or if a Dependent child ceases to be an eligible Dependent under the Plan, the Spouse and Dependent child may continue medical coverage under the Plan until the date the Special Retiree attains age 65.

If there is any conflict between this document and the Plan Document, the Plan Document's terms shall control.

Version History

Sun, 08/13/2023 - 22:03

Retirement Fund

Policy Owner Human Resources

Responsible Office(s) Human Resources

Policy

Employees may participate in the University's Defined Contribution Retirement Plan offered through TIAA upon the date of hire. Employees are eligible to receive a matching contribution if they meet each of the following criteria:

- Complete one year of continuous service or worked for a four-year institution and worked through May 1 of the most recent academic year;
- Full time or part-time employees (including 10 and 11-month employees) who complete at least 1,000 continuous work hours; AND
- Are at least 25 years of age.

New employees employed full-time at a higher education institution a minimum of one year immediately before employment at Converse are currently exempt from the one-year waiting period. Previous employment verification must be provided.

The retirement program is currently provided through TIAA. Participants have the option of contributing a percentage of their monthly base salary to this fund. The University may contribute a percentage of the monthly base salary for participants who contribute a minimum amount established by the University.

Plan Summary information and enrollment forms are available in the Human Resources Office. If there is any conflict between this policy and the Plan Document(s), the terms of the Plan Document(s) shall control.

This plan is subject to change or elimination at any time, with or without notice, at the University's sole discretion.

Version History

Sun, 08/13/2023 - 22:03

Tuition Exchange Program (TEP)

Policy Owner Financial Planning

Responsible Office(s) Financial Planning, Human

Resources, Finance and Business

Policy Statement

This policy establishes the guiding principles, basic terms, and administrative authority for awarding tuition waivers through the Tuition Exchange or Council of Independent Colleges' programs.

A tuition waiver through the Tuition Exchange or Council of Independent Colleges provides financial assistance to degree-seeking traditional undergraduate students whose parents are employees of member institutions.

Purpose

Converse University is pleased to accept applications for tuition waivers through the Tuition Exchange and Council of Independent Colleges' programs.

The purposes of tuition waivers through these two programs are: (1) the recruitment of traditional undergraduate students whose parents are eligible employees of member institutions and to provide financial assistance and enhanced educational and developmental opportunities for traditional undergraduate students while supporting the University in its teaching, research, and service missions; and (2) to provide an additional benefit to Converse's faculty and staff, which aids in the recruitment and tuition of employees. This policy explains the guiding principles, states the basic terms, and establishes the administrative authority for all

Policy

Converse University Policy for Awarding Tuition Exchange/Council of Independent Colleges Tuition Waivers (Imports and Exports)

2.1 Export Policy

Converse University belongs to two tuition exchange organizations: Tuition Exchange, Inc. (hereinafter known as TEP), a national organization that administers multilateral tuition remission scholarships for Full-time Employees of member institutions, and the Council of Independent Colleges' Tuition Exchange Program (hereinafter known as CIC-TEP). Both the TEP and CIC-TEP export scholarships are offered to full-time Converse employees' dependent children who apply initially prior to the age of 22. The benefit is for undergraduate degree programs only.

3. Policy Definitions

The following definitions are used for the purposes of this policy.

3.1 Eligible Student

3.1.1 Import Student

An eligible import student is defined as the dependent of an eligible employee of a member institution who has been certified as eligible by the exporting institution and meets all Converse University admission requirements.

3.1.2 Export Student

An eligible export student is defined as an eligible dependent of an Eligible Converse University Employee who is a natural-born child, legally adopted child, or stepchild, unmarried, **and** who is eligible to be claimed as a deduction on the eligible employee's income tax return for the current year and in the tax period in which the tuition is waived.

3.1.2.1 Stepchildren must also have established residency on a permanent basis in the staff member's household. A divorce decree that states the employee is financially responsible for the dependent's education may suffice in lieu of the above requirement. Children under the legal guardianship of employees also qualify for the benefit.

3.2 Eligible Converse University Employee

An eligible converse university employee for purposes of this policy is defined as an employee who has completed one year of uninterrupted full-time employment or full-time teaching at Converse and who continues their uninterrupted service for the full duration of the TEP or CIC-TEP scholarship period. A change in work status or termination of employment, or death of the employee, will continue the TEP or CIC-TEP scholarship through only the end of the academic year in which the event occurs. If one of these occurs prior to the start of an academic year, the TEP or CIC-TEP scholarship ends immediately.

3.2.1 Employees who join Converse from an eligible tuition exchange exporting school will be eligible for export benefits immediately. The one-year continuous employment requirement will be waived for this category of employee.

3.3 Exporting Institution

An exporting institution is defined as a University or University that is a member in good standing with the Tuition Exchange and/or the Council of Independent Colleges.

Employee eligibility will be determined and certified by the exporting institution.

4. Policy

4.1 TEP Limits Student Exports

Student Exports under the TEP are limited based upon the number of imports the University has received. The Exports and Imports must be in balance in order for the University to maintain

membership in the organization without penalty or restriction. Therefore, unless the University has a surplus of export slots, a TEP export scholarship will be granted to only one student per family in any given year. There are no limitations to exports under the CIC-TEP program.

4.1.1 Export Selection, Duration, Re-application, and Exceptions

Converse must balance the number of its TEP exports with “imports” or enrollees at Converse. There may be a limited number of export scholarships available in any given year. When this occurs, the Converse Tuition Exchange Committee will serve as the TEP selection committee, primarily using merit-based criteria (GPA, courses taken, test scores, recommendations, etc.) to make their choice(s) by December each year. The duration of TEP scholarships also depends upon the status of the export/import balance at Converse. When export credits permit, recipients may be renewed for a total of eight scholarship semesters to cover undergraduate study. Fewer semesters are covered if the recipient enters the TEP or CIC-TEP program as a transfer. Export recipients wishing to renew their TEP or CIC-TEP scholarship must reapply annually by **November 1**, prior to the academic year being recertified. For import/export balancing reasons, there are times when these recertifications must be determined on a priority basis by the Converse Tuition Exchange Committee using primarily merit-based criteria.

Graduate study, summer school, and study-abroad courses are not covered by TEP or CIC-TEP export scholarships. New TEP or CIC-TEP exports must be admitted by the importing institution, and those students renewing TEP or CIC-TEP scholarships must maintain the required academic and behavioral standards of the importing institution.

4.2 Export Scholarship Value

The importing institution determines the value of the TEP or CIC-TEP scholarship it awards and records this on the Application/Certification Form returned to Converse’s Tuition Exchange Liaison Officer and the student. The scholarship usually covers tuition charges but not room, board, course overloads, and other fees. Higher-tuition universities may elect to reduce their award to the “Minimum Value Scholarship” established each year by the TEP or CIC-TEP (TE) Board of Directors. Before accepting a TEP

or CIC-TEP scholarship, the student should seek cost information from the host institution for which they will be responsible.

4.3 Export Application Process

Each TEP or CIC-TEP candidate must submit a completed preliminary tuition exchange application form (available on the Human Resource website) to the Tuition Exchange Liaison Officer as early as possible after September 1, but no later than November 1. The applicant will then receive all applicable instructions and information necessary to complete the entire TEP or CIC-TEP scholarship application process.

4.4 Enrollment Status

A traditional undergraduate student is considered full-time in a given academic term or session when enrolled in twelve (12) or more credit hours (in a January term). If a student incurs tuition expenses, the tuition exchange will cover up to six (6) academic credits). An eligible student must be enrolled full-time in every academic term to be eligible for the tuition waiver.

5. Eligibility Requirements

Students must meet the following criteria for consideration of their application for a tuition waiver through the aforementioned programs.

- Must meet all requirements for regular admission as a degree-seeking traditional undergraduate student. Must apply for admission before November 15th.
- Must have a minimum 3.5 cumulative high school GPA.
- Must file the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) each year before November 15th.
- Applications for tuition waivers must be received by December 1st for consideration. Late applications will only be considered if award limits have not been met.
- Must maintain a cumulative 2.50 or higher GPA while a Converse student.
- Students must be meeting minimum satisfactory academic progress standards based on the University’s published SAP policy.
- SC residents who are recipients of the SC HOPE scholarship in their first year must meet minimum state requirements to convert the HOPE Scholarship to SC LIFE

(earn a minimum of 30 credit hours with a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0). Students who fail to meet eligibility criteria will not have their tuition waiver award increased to compensate for the lost financial aid.

- SC residents who are recipients of SC LIFE, SC LIFE Enhancement, SC Palmetto Fellows, or SC Palmetto Fellows Enhancement must maintain eligibility for these programs as defined in the rules, regulations, policies, and procedures for each respective program. Students who fail to meet eligibility criteria will not have their tuition waiver award increased to compensate for the lost financial aid.
- Eligible employees must be recertified by the exporting institution each year.

6. Limitations & Restrictions

6.1 Availability of Tuition Waivers

The total number of tuition waiver recipients and awards will be established by the Vice President for Finance and Business, the Vice President for Enrollment Management, and the Associate Vice President for Student Financial Services. These annual limits will be calculated in accordance with regulations regarding import and export ratios as required by the program.

These personnel may recommend changes, additions, deletions and/or termination of this program at any time with approval by The Leadership Council of the University.

6.2 Awardees

Converse University will award initial tuition waivers through the aforementioned programs to first-year, full-time freshmen only with consideration given to new transfer applicants and upper-class students if annual limits have not been met.

6.3 Award Limits

Converse University limits the number of semesters for which a student is eligible to eight (8) full-time semesters and four (4) January terms at Converse. Students are not eligible for these tuition waivers for summer terms.

6.4 Tuition Waiver Award Amounts

The value of the tuition waiver shall not exceed the published tuition. Current tuition rates can be found in the current catalog.

6.5 Other Financial Aid and the Tuition Waiver

All other grants and scholarship aid will be discounted from the value of the tuition waiver. This includes grant and scholarship aid from federal, state, and institutional sources.

Private scholarships earned by the student may be used for on-campus room and board and book expenses (only if there is an excess of funds after fixed costs are paid). Commuting students may use outside scholarship funds earned by the student not to exceed the cost of books. Students wishing to use excess aid for books must present a written estimate of books and materials provided by the University's bookstore to the Associate Vice President for Student Financial Services for approval.

All financial aid is subject to the University's policy for grant aid refunds.

Related Resources

[The Tuition Exchange:](#)

[The CIC Exchange:](#)

Version History

Sun, 08/13/2023 - 21:54

links added

Tuition Remission Program

Policy Owner Financial Planning

Responsible Financial Planning, Human

Office(s) Resources, Finance and Business

Policy Statement

The purpose of tuition remission benefits is to provide financial assistance and enhance educational and developmental opportunities for Converse University employees, their spouses and/or dependents while supporting the University in its teaching, research, and service missions. This policy explains the guiding principles, states the basic terms, and establishes the administrative authority for all tuition remission benefits. Tuition remission is a financial benefit provided by the institution and is subject to limitations and exclusions as outlined in this policy. The University reserves the right to update and amend this policy at any time. Students benefiting from tuition remission are always subject to the current policy in effect.

Purpose

To establish the guiding principles, basic terms, and administrative authority for tuition remission.

Policy

4. Professional Leadership Doctoral Students

4.1 Tuition Remission and Program Structure for EdD

The EdD in Professional Leadership is designed to be taken in a specified progression over 3 years. It would be difficult for employees, spouses, and dependents to take 6 or more years to complete the program, which would be the result of taking only one class per semester/session. Instead, if this proposal is followed, employees will reap over a 50% discount in tuition and complete the program in 3 years. The structure for the program is as follows:

Employees, spouses, and dependents will be responsible for the cost of 27 of the 60-degree hours under this plan (a discount of more than 50%). Employees, spouses, and dependents who persist to the final course (Capstone in Spring 3) will be rewarded by receiving the final 6-hour class as part of tuition remission. Students **may not** receive tuition remission for more than 33 credits in the Professional Leadership doctoral program.

The value of the tuition remission is based on the current tuition rates for the program.

5. Professional Enhancement Coursework (Non-degree seeking, eligible employees only):

5.1 Eligible for Tuition Remission.

5.1 (a) Eligible Student

Eligible employees of Converse University may receive tuition remission for professional enhancement coursework as a non-degree seeking student. Spouses and dependents are not eligible for tuition remission for professional enhancement or non-degree seeking courses.

5.1(b) Eligible Courses

Courses offered for academic credit are eligible for tuition remission. However, continuing education workshops and seminars that provide continuing education units (CEU) are not eligible for tuition remission.

5.2 Credit Hour Limitations.

Eligible employees may take up to six undergraduate credits or three graduate credits

(1 three credit course) per semester (Fall, Spring, Jan, and Summer) for a total of 21 credits per year (undergraduate) or 12 credits per year (graduate) at 100% tuition remission. Credits taken beyond the tuition remission limit will be charged at the standard rate and will be the responsibility of the student.

Please note: Eligible employees may use the tuition remission benefit for either a degree-seeking program or professional enhancement coursework but may not receive the benefit for both. Tuition remission benefits will be capped based on the limits set forth above.

6. Effects of Drops and Withdrawals for Converse II and Graduate Students

6.1 Drops & Withdrawals.

Students receiving tuition remission must maintain enrollment in all courses for which the benefit is paid. Students will forfeit the benefit for dropped courses. (For example, a graduate student registers for six credits at \$416 per credit hour for a total benefit of \$2,496. The student withdraws from one three-credit course during the semester. The tuition remission benefit will be reduced by \$1,248 or the cost of the three credit course.)

6.2 Change in Status.

In the event of a change in employment, dependency, or spousal status for the student, Converse may require an adjustment to the tuition remission benefit. The effect will be pro-rated and the employee may be responsible for the resulting uncovered tuition balance.

The recipient is responsible for repayment of all costs incurred by such reversal.

6.3 Satisfactory Academic Progress.

All students receiving tuition remission must meet the minimum satisfactory academic progress standards for financial aid as outlined in the University's satisfactory academic progress policy for financial aid. Students not meeting minimum satisfactory academic progress standards will forfeit the tuition remission benefit.

6.4 Signature on Form.

Signatures on the Tuition Remission application verify that the

student/employee has read, understands and agrees to abide by the policies and procedures set forth herein.

7. Intent to Enroll

7.1 Meaning & Timing.

Intent to enroll refers to the subsequent semester enrollment status of a student during the January term or summer session. A student is said to demonstrate "intent to enroll" during the summer session if the student is registered for the subsequent fall semester, and to demonstrate "intent to enroll" during the January term if the student is registered for the subsequent spring semester. New students demonstrate "intent to enroll" during the summer or January term if they are admitted to a degree program to start in the subsequent semester.

7.2 January Term.

Traditional undergraduate students are expected to enroll in each January term. Traditional undergraduate students must obtain approval from the Associate Provost for Student success to not enroll in each January term.

8. Responsibilities and Procedures

8.1 Description

Tuition remission provides financial assistance to a degree-seeking traditional undergraduate, Converse II, graduate student, for Converse University employees, their spouses and/or dependents. Only eligible employees may receive tuition remission for professional development or non-degree seeking courses.

8.2 Limits

8.2(a) Traditional Undergraduate Students

Degree-seeking traditional undergraduate students will be eligible for the value of full-time tuition for the academic year in which the student is enrolled. Tuition remission does not cover fees (matriculation, lab, music lessons, etc.) or room and board.

Please note: All other grant/scholarship aid awarded from federal, state or institutional sources will be deducted from tuition before calculating the value of the tuition remission. Students with scholarships from outside organizations not affiliated with the University (i.e. -

Ruritans, church organizations) may use outside financial aid to assist with room and board expenses (if living on campus). Tuition remission may not be used for fees, room and board, or other expenses.

8.2(b) Converse II Students

Degree-seeking Converse II spouses/dependents will be eligible for the value of tuition for up to twelve (12) credits in the Fall term, 12 credits in the Spring term, three (3) credit hours in the January term, and six (6) combined credits for all summer terms.

Please note: All other grant/scholarship aid awarded from federal, state or institutional sources will be deducted from tuition before calculating the value of the tuition remission. Students with scholarships from outside organizations not affiliated with the University (i.e. - Ruritans, church organizations, other private donors) may use outside financial aid to assist with room and board expenses (if living on campus). Tuition remission may not be used for fees, room and board, or other expenses.

Employees who are Converse II students will be eligible for no more than three (3) credit hours per term of enrollment.

8.2(c) Graduate Students

Degree-seeking graduate students will be eligible for no more than three (3) credit hours in the Fall/Spring terms, three (3) credit hours in the January term, and no more than one three (3) credit hour class per summer term (not to exceed six credit hours in all summer terms). For example, if a Graduate student is enrolled in six credit hours in Summer I and six credit hours in Summer II, the Graduate student would be eligible for a total of six (6) credit hours of tuition remission total.

Please note: Any grant/scholarship aid awarded from federal, state or institutional sources will be deducted from tuition before calculating the value of the tuition remission.

8.2(d) Enrollment limitations

An employee/spouse/dependent may enroll in an appropriate course if there is space available and if six or more students are already enrolled in the course. One may elect to enroll in a class of fewer than seven students by paying the usual charges. Tuition-free students may not enroll in directed independent studies and internships,

unless the professor agrees to waive his or her compensation. Students who are granted enrollment in a DIS (Directed Independent Study), off campus courses (i.e. Wofford, etc.) or other courses delivered by a third-party that require the University to pay for the teaching of the tuition remission student (i.e. Acadeum) will be charged the cost to the University. The cost may be revised at the University's discretion. DIS, Acadeum, off campus courses (i.e. Wofford, etc.) and other courses for which the University must pay for the teaching of the tuition remission student are not eligible for tuition remission. The cost may be revised at the University's discretion. Employees must make up the time they miss from work in order to attend a class during working hours.

8.2(e) Employee Supervisor Approval

The employee must have the signature approval of his or her supervisor prior to enrolling in each course. Employees in some positions may not be allowed to take courses during regular office hours. Office schedules cannot be altered to allow employees to attend classes, and class schedules cannot be changed to allow employees to attend classes.

8.2(f) Employee Death or Total and Permanent Disability

In the event of an employee's death or total and permanent disability, the University will extend tuition remission benefits based on the following criteria:

- The employee must have been employed full-time or part-time with benefits at Converse University for the last seven (7) consecutive years immediately prior to the time of death or total disability in order to qualify their dependents.
- The dependent(s) is only eligible for a traditional undergraduate degree at Converse University.
- The dependent/parent **must complete** the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) using Converse's school code (003431) by June 1st of each year for which the tuition remission is being requested.
- This benefit grants tuition only. Dependents must pay all other course fees and expenses including reservation fees, any room and board fees, books or other extra costs such as lab

fees or directed independent study fees.

- The dependent(s) must meet eligibility requirements as established by the institution.
- The dependent(s) at the time of the death or total disability must have completed the 10th grade.
- This benefit has no cash value.
- The subsequent remarriage of a surviving spouse has no bearing on this benefit.
- This benefit does not extend beyond the dependent's age of 24 years.

8.2 (g) Exclusions

Directed Independent Study (DIS) courses, internships, all off-campus courses, courses delivered through Acadeum and/or any course requiring Converse to pay for the teaching of a tuition remission student are not available through the Tuition Remission Program. Spouses and dependents are not eligible for tuition remission for professional development and/or non-degree seeking courses.

9. Admission

9.1 Admission Timing.

An employee, spouse and/or dependent must be admitted into a regular degree-seeking program prior to the start of the academic term for which tuition remission is requested and must remain a regular degree-seeking student during the award period.

9.2 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) Requirement

All employees/spouses/dependents must complete the FAFSA each academic year for which the tuition remission benefit is requested. The FAFSA must be completed by June 1st of each year for the upcoming year. Employees/spouses/dependents who do not complete the FAFSA will not be eligible for tuition remission. Applications can be completed at <https://studentaid.gov/> and must include Converse University (school code #003431) as a recipient of the information. Graduate students are not required to complete the FAFSA to receive tuition remission benefits.

9.3 Funding Source(s)

The source or sources used to fund tuition remission must be under the control of the University and judged by the University to be appropriate for tuition remission support. The University reserves the right to limit, decrease, or suspend tuition

remission benefits at any time.

10. Payment of Tuition

10.1 Scholarship.

The payment of tuition remission is considered scholarship that offsets all of the following costs charged to the student account during the contract period of the assistantship:

10.1(a) Total tuition based on the enrollment and limitations expressed above (number of credit hours waived) as per the Schedule of Tuition and Fees. Additional fees are the responsibility of the student.

10.2 Employee Status. Receipt of this benefit does not affect or change the at will employment status of the employee.

11. Taxable Benefit

11.1 Graduate Level.

According to IRS regulations, the value of the tuition remission benefit is taxable for employees, their spouses and dependents if the courses are at the graduate level. The value of the benefit will be reflected on the employee's W-2 form at the end of the year.

The employee may meet the conditions of a qualifying work-related education and therefore may be able to deduct the education costs. Additional information can be found at the IRS website: <https://www.irs.gov>

Employees should always consult with their personal tax consultant concerning taxable income and deductions.

12. Automatic Termination of Benefit

12.1 The University in any of the following circumstances will automatically terminate the tuition remission benefit:

- The employee/spouse/dependent completes the degree program
- The employee/spouse/dependent voluntarily withdraws or is administratively withdrawn from the degree program
- The employee is terminated, resigns, or otherwise leaves the employment of the University prior to the start of the academic term for which the tuition remission is to be applied

13. Administrative Authority

13.1 Basic Terms and General Management Procedures

13.1(a) Basic Terms

The Vice President for Finance and Business, the Vice President for Operations and Strategic Planning, the Associate Vice President for Student Financial Services, and the Director of Human Resources have the authority to establish and modify the basic terms for tuition remission benefits.

13.1(b) General Management Procedures

The Vice President for Finance and Business and the Associate Vice President for Student Financial Services has the authority to develop and maintain general management procedures for tuition remission benefits.

The Associate Vice President for Student Financial Services has the authority to calculate the value of the tuition remission benefit for each academic term for which the employee/spouse/dependent qualifies.

13.1(c) Local Terms and Management Procedures

An academic or administration unit of the University does not have the authority to develop local terms and management procedures for tuition remission.

14. Required Forms

14.1 Application.

The Application for Dependent Tuition Remission for Traditional Undergraduates form must be completed annually by the employee and the most recent federal 1040 tax returns must be provided verifying that the student is claimed as a dependent by the Employee.

14.2 Application for Employee/Spouse/Dependent Tuition Remission for Converse II and Graduate students form must be completed for **each term** for which the benefit is requested and the most recent federal 1040 tax returns must be provided, verifying that the employee and spouse have filed "married filing jointly" or "married filing separately."

Related Resources

[Application for Employee/Spouse/Dependent Traditional Undergraduate Tuition Rem...](#)
[Application for Employee/Spouse/Dependent Converse II or Graduate Tuition Remis...](#)

Definitions and Acronyms

3.1 Eligible Employee

To be eligible for tuition remission, the Converse University employee must be a full or part-time (exempt or non-exempt) an employee in good standing with benefits and has completed six (6) months of continuous employment prior to the first day of class of the term for which the tuition remission is requested. Employees who are not eligible for full benefits are not eligible for tuition remission under this policy.

3.2 Employee

Category

3.2(a) Exempt

Employee

An employee who meets Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) requirements to be exempt from overtime pay and occupies an executive, administrative, or professional position, as defined under the FLSA. Non-instructional exempt employees receive compensation at a minimum salary that meets the requirements set under the South Carolina code and the FLSA.

3.2(b) Non-Exempt Employee

An employee who does not meet the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) requirements to be exempt from overtime pay and who is paid for all overtime hours worked in any workweek.

3.2(c) Student

Any person enrolled in courses at Converse University is considered a student (employee, spouse, dependent).

3.3 Enrollment Status

3.3(a) Traditional Undergraduate and Converse II Students Enrollment Status Definition
Enrollment status for traditional undergraduate and Converse II students is determined based on the following enrollment per term:

- 1-5 credits less than half-time
- 6-8 credits half time
- 9-11 credits three quarter time
- 12 or more credits full time

To be eligible for tuition remission, the undergraduate student must be enrolled full-time.

Traditional undergraduate students enrolled less

than full-time will not be eligible for tuition remission. Converse II students are eligible to enroll less than full-time.

3.3(b) Graduate Students

A graduate student is considered full-time in a given academic term or session when enrolled in nine credit hours or more. A graduate student is considered half-time in a given academic term or session when enrolled in less than nine and at least six credit hours. Summer sessions will be combined to determine enrollment status.

3.4 International Student

An international graduate student is a graduate student who holds an F1 or J1 student visa. International students are not eligible for tuition remission.

3.5 Definition of a Spouse

A spouse is defined as a person in a legally contracted marriage recognized by the State of South Carolina to a Converse University employee, with the exception of an estranged spouse who maintains a separate domicile.

3.6 Definition of a Dependent

A "dependent" is defined as the son/daughter, stepson/stepdaughter, or legally adopted son/daughter of an eligible Converse University employee who is under the age of 24 and is claimed as a dependent on the employee's federal income tax return for the year(s) in which the tuition remission is requested.

Dependent students over the age of 24 are eligible for reduced tuition benefits as a Converse II students and are not eligible for tuition remission.

3.7 Student Account

A student account is the University billing statement assigned to a student and maintained by the Student Accounts office.

Version History

Sun, 08/13/2023 - 21:51

Direct Reports, Cabinet, Faculty Senate May 2021
Applications are accessible via my.converse.

Performance Guidelines

Absence Reporting and Call-In Requirements

Policy Owner Human Resources, Provost

Responsible Office(s) Human Resources, Provost

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set forth guidelines and procedures for employee absences and tardiness to promote the efficient operation of the institution.

Scope

This policy applies to all employees, including faculty, regardless of their status as exempt or non-exempt employees under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). This policy does not apply to absences covered by the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) or leave provided as a reasonable accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). These exceptions are described in separate policies.

Policy

Punctual and regular attendance is an essential responsibility of each employee at Converse University. Employees are expected to report to work as scheduled, on time, and prepared to start working. The University has a "no-fault" policy as it relates to absences. An "absence" is defined as the failure of an employee to report for work when he or she is scheduled.

Employees must submit an electronic time off request via iSolved in advance of any absences that can be planned, including, but not limited to, medical appointments, funerals, and situations that cannot be addressed outside of normal working hours.

If an employee is **unable to report to work for any reason** (including if the employee will be late or leaving early), the employee must speak directly to his/her Supervisor as soon as the employee knows that he/she will not be able to work (preferably at least two hours before the scheduled shift), or as soon as practicable thereafter.

If an employee completes a health questionnaire required by Converse due to a pandemic or epidemic, and it is determined that they should

not report to work, s/he must immediately contact his/her Supervisor. This direct contact ensures proper staffing. Emailing or texting are not acceptable forms of direct contact **unless** the employee's Supervisor has expressly permitted it. If the supervisor calls or responds to the employee to request additional information, the employee should respond promptly (and even then, the email or text should be an initial contact, followed as soon as practicable by a phone call). If the Supervisor is unavailable for any reason, the employee should leave a message on the Supervisor's voicemail and continue to try to reach the Supervisor directly.

When contact is established with the Supervisor, the following information should be provided:

(1) specific dates of absences (i.e., begin and end date), if known,

(2) an expected return-to-work date,

(3) the specific reasons for needing to be absent (if the employee knows which type of leave may cover the absence, the employee may state the type; however, this does not excuse the employee from explaining the specific reasons why an absence is necessary and responding to clarification questions from the University), and

(4) contact information at which the employee may be reachable during the absence.

If an employee is unable to provide the information listed in (1) and (2) above during his or her initial contact with the Supervisor, then the employee is expected to adhere to the above guidelines for each day the employee continues to be absent. Providing false information in connection with any absence may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

If the absence is anticipated to last more than one day or is due to a medical condition, the Supervisor may make reasonable requests for documentation from a doctor or from Converse's telemedicine system explaining the need for the absence. The Supervisor will ensure that all employees are treated equally in terms of requesting medical documentation for absences.

Version History

Mon, 11/27/2023 - 15:49

Complaint Log

Policy Owner Office of Institutional Research
Responsible Office(s) Office of Institutional Research

Policy

Each office or department is responsible for maintaining records of written complaints against the University.

1. The complaint log must include:
 - The date and manner in which the complaint was received
 - The original complaint
 - Action(s) taken to resolve the complaintOr
Justification(s) for dismissing the complaint
 - Response(s) to the complainant
 - Date and manner of response signifying the resolution of the complaint
2. The office or department which receives the complaint is responsible for logging the complaint through its resolution, even if other offices or departments are responsible for the final resolution.
3. Complaints and complaint logs are to be kept strictly confidential. Complaints and complaint logs are not to be connected to any other records, databases, or tools which could associate or extract complaint information. Complaints and complaint logs should only be shared with other University personnel to:
 - To bring complaints to appropriate resolution
 - Audit or report records to appropriate University administrators. **FERPA and HIPAA regulations, as applicable, must be followed at all times.**
4. The Office for Institutional Research, Assessment, and Effectiveness is responsible for maintaining a master copy of all complaint logs. Departments and offices should submit their completed complaint logs to the Office for Institutional Research, Assessment, and Effectiveness at the beginning of each academic term.

Version History

Sun, 08/13/2023 - 21:41

Conflicts of Interest

Responsible Office(s) Human Resources, Provost

Policy Statement

The following sets forth the official policy of Converse University (“the University”) with respect to conflicts of interest. All Employees—administrators, faculty members, and all other employees (referred to collectively as “Employees”)—and members of the Converse Board of Trustees (“Trustees”) are expected to adhere to both the letter and the spirit of this policy.

This policy is subject to modification from time to time as the University determines appropriate in its sole discretion.

Policy

Defining Conflict of Interest

A potential conflict of interest occurs when an Employee’s or Trustee’s personal or private interests might lead an independent observer reasonably to question whether the Employee’s or Trustee’s professional actions or decisions are influenced by considerations of significant personal interest, financial or otherwise.

Generally, a conflict of interest occurs when an Employee or Trustee (1) has an existing or potential financial or other interest that impairs or might appear to impair, the Employee’s or Trustee’s independent judgment in the discharge of responsibilities to the University, or (2) may receive a material benefit, financial or otherwise, from knowledge or information confidential to the University.

An Employee or Trustee shall be considered as having a personal interest in any transaction in which they have any material connection or substantial financial interest. Specifically, a material connection includes the involvement of any Family Member or any household member of a Family Member. For the purpose of this policy, “Family Member” shall be defined as any individual related to the Employee or Trustee through blood or marriage (e.g., spouse, son, daughter, niece, nephew, cousin, grandchild, father, mother, brother, sister, father-in-law, mother-in-law, sister-in-law, brother-in-law, grandfather, grandmother). By extension, close, personal friends also provide the potential of a similar conflict of interest. An Employee or Trustee shall further be considered as having a personal interest if there will be a benefit to any

business enterprise in which the Employee or Trustee has a substantial interest, to any business enterprise in which any Family Member has a substantial interest, or to any business enterprise in which they or a Family Member serves as a director, trustee, or officer.

Employees and Trustees should conduct their affairs so as to avoid or minimize conflicts of interest and must respond appropriately when a conflict of interest arises. Any Employee who has a question as to whether a situation will give rise to a conflict of interest is urged to discuss the matter promptly with the President of the University, the Vice President for Finance and Business, or both. Any Trustee who has a question as to whether a situation will give rise to a conflict of interest is urged to discuss the matter promptly with the Chair of the Board of Trustees or, if the situation relates to the Chair, with the Vice-Chair of the Board of Trustees.

Required Disclosures

Prior to consummating a transaction or acting upon a matter involving the possible existence of a conflict of interest, the Employee or Trustee involved shall make full disclosure of all relevant facts. In the case of the President of the University or a Trustee other than the Chair, such disclosure will be made to the Chair of the Board of Trustees. Conflicts of interest involving the Chair of the Board of Trustees must be disclosed to the Vice-Chair of the Board of Trustees. Conflicts of interest involving all Employees other than the President must be disclosed to the President, the Vice President for Finance and Business, or both. The person to whom the Employee or Trustee reports the potential conflict of interest will determine whether a conflict of interest exists and determine what conditions or restrictions, if any, should be imposed to reduce or eliminate such conflict of interest.

Employees with executive or administrative responsibilities and the Trustees will be asked to report affiliations, positions, and material financial interests held by members of their immediate families annually.

Restraint on Participation

Trustees or officers who have declared or been found to have a conflict of interest shall refrain from participating in consideration of proposed transactions unless, for special reasons, the Board of Trustees or the administration requests

information or interpretation. Any Trustee with a conflict of interest shall not vote, attempt to influence any vote, participate in discussions, or be present at the time of any vote concerning the transaction or matter for which the conflict of interest is applicable.

Enforcement of this Policy

A violation of any provision of this policy may subject an Employee to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

As with all policies, there may be exceptions; however, they should be recognized and treated as exceptions, and any variations from this policy shall require the express written approval of the University.

Version History

Sun, 08/13/2023 - 21:13

Converse University Research
Misconduct Policy (March
2019)

Policy Owner	Provost, Office of Institutional Research
Responsible Office(s)	Provost, Office of Institutional Research

Policy

- I. **Introduction**
Converse University (“Converse”) holds to the highest standards of research integrity and expects all of its faculty, staff, students, and persons affiliated with Converse in the proposal or conduct of research to conduct research according to these standards.

Through the Office of the Provost and through the academic Deans, Converse supports a community of ethical conduct and research integrity. Every researcher is personally responsible for their conduct when performing research and will be held to the highest ethical standards.
- II. **Scope**
This policy applies to any person who is employed by, is an agent of, is under the control of, or is affiliated by contract or agreement with Converse, and to any student of Converse who is engaged in or applying for engagement in research, as

defined in Section III of this policy. This policy applies to any principal investigators, co-principal investigators, technicians, and other staff members, as well as to students engaged in independent or faculty-mentored research, including those working as laboratory or research assistants.

III. Definitions²

- A. The *Deciding Official* means the Provost of Converse University. The Provost will make determinations on allegations of research misconduct and determine any institutional responses. At Converse, the Provost (or their designee) also serves as the *Research Integrity Officer*, who assesses allegations of research misconduct and determines when such allegations warrant inquiries and who oversees inquiries and investigations.
- B. *Inquiry* means gathering information and initial fact-finding to determine whether an allegation or apparent instance of research misconduct warrants an investigation.
- C. *Investigation* means the examination and evaluation of all relevant facts to determine if research misconduct has occurred, and, if so, to determine the responsible person and the seriousness of the research misconduct and to evaluate appropriate action.
- D. *OIG* means the Office of the Inspector General, the office within the National Science Foundation (NSF) that is responsible for the research misconduct and research integrity activities.
- E. *ORI* means the Office of Research Integrity, the office within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) that is responsible for the research misconduct and research integrity activities of the U.S. Public Health Service.
- F. *PHS* means the U.S. Public Health Service, an operating component of the DHHS.
- G. *PHS regulation* means the Public Health Service regulation establishing standards for institutional inquiries and investigations into allegations of research misconduct, which is set forth at 42 C.F.R. Part 93.
- H. *Research* for the purposes of this policy is defined as any systematic investigation, including research proposal development or pilot testing, designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge. Generalizable

knowledge includes any systematically generated products of research intended for dissemination within or beyond the institutional setting.

- I. *Research misconduct* is defined as fabrication, falsification, or plagiarism in proposing, performing, or reviewing research, or in reporting research results.
 - Fabrication is making up data or results and recording or reporting them.
 - Falsification is manipulating research materials, equipment, or processes, or changing or omitting data or results such that the research is not accurately represented in the research record.
 - Plagiarism is the appropriation of another person's ideas, processes, results, or words without giving appropriate credit.
 - Research misconduct does not include honest error or differences of opinion. (Source: 65 FR 76260-76264; 70 FR 37010-37016; 2 CFR § 910.132; 10 CFR § 733.3)³
- J. A finding of *research misconduct* requires that:
 - T be a significant departure from accepted practices of the relevant research community;
 - The misconduct be committed intentionally, or knowingly, or recklessly; and
 - The allegation be proven by a preponderance of evidence. (Source: 65 FR 76260-76264; 70 FR 37010-37016; 2 CFR § 910.132; 10 CFR § 733.3)⁴
- K. *Respondent* means the person against whom an allegation of research misconduct is directed or the person whose actions are the subject of the inquiry or investigation. There can be more than one respondent in any inquiry or investigation.
- L. *Complainant* means a person who makes an allegation of research misconduct.

IV. Rights and Responsibilities

- A. Deciding Official and Research Integrity Officer (DO-RIO)
The Provost will serve as the DO-RIO, who will have primary responsibility for

implementation of the institution's policies and procedures on research misconduct. The DO-RIO will:

- Receive allegations of research misconduct;
- Assess each allegation of research misconduct to determine whether it falls within the definition of research misconduct and warrants an inquiry;
- As necessary, take interim action and notify any appropriate agency (OIG, ORI, PHS, or any other) of the circumstances of the allegation;
- Sequester research data and evidence pertinent to the allegation of research misconduct and maintain it securely;
- Provide confidentiality to those involved in the research misconduct proceeding as required by 42 CFR § 93.108, other applicable law, and institutional policy;
- Notify the respondent (whenever possible) and provide opportunities for them to review/comment/respond to allegations, evidence, and other relevant information;
- Inform respondents, complainants, and witnesses of progress in the investigation of any allegation of research misconduct;
- Adjudicate any allegations of research misconduct;
- Ensure that administrative actions taken by the institution and any granting agency are enforced and take appropriate action to notify other involved parties, such as sponsors, law enforcement agencies, professional societies, and licensing boards of those actions as the DO-RIO determines are applicable; and
- Maintain records of the research misconduct proceeding and make them available to granting or sponsoring agencies as required by terms of grant or sponsorship.

B. Complainant

The Complainant is responsible for making allegations in good faith, maintaining confidentiality, and cooperating with the inquiry and investigation. As a matter of good practice, the Complainant must be interviewed during an investigation.

C. Respondent

The Respondent is responsible for maintaining confidentiality and cooperating with the conduct of an inquiry and investigation. Whenever practicable, the Respondent is entitled to:

- A good faith effort from the DO-RIO to notify the Respondent in writing at the time of or before beginning an inquiry;
- An opportunity to comment on the inquiry report and have their comments attached to the report;
- Notification of the outcome of the inquiry and a copy of the inquiry report;
- Notification in writing of the allegations to be investigated within a reasonable time after the determination that an investigation is warranted; and
- The opportunity to be interviewed during the investigation.

The Respondent should be given the opportunity to admit that research misconduct occurred and that they committed the research misconduct. The DO-RIO or the President of Converse may terminate the institution's review of an allegation that has been admitted, if the admission and any proposed settlement and any action by any relevant agency is acceptable to the President of Converse.

V. Completion of Cases and Administrative Action

- A. All inquiries and investigations will be carried through to completion.
- B. A case may be closed at the inquiry stage on the basis of a finding by the DO-RIO that an investigation is not warranted.
- C. A case may be closed by the DO-RIO at the investigation stage on the basis of a finding of no misconduct.
- D. If the DO-RIO determines that research misconduct is substantiated by the findings, the DO-RIO will decide on the appropriate actions to be taken.

The administrative actions in the case of faculty, staff members or other non-

student researchers affiliated with or under the control of Converse may include:

- Withdrawal or correction of all pending or published abstracts and papers emanating from the research where research misconduct was found;
- Removal of the responsible person from the particular project;
- Letter of reprimand;
- Special monitoring of future work;
- Suspension from future Converse research, either for a limited time or permanently;
- Restitution of funds to the grantor agency as appropriate;
- In egregious cases as determined by the DO-RIO, the initiation of steps leading to termination of employment as specified in the *Faculty Handbook* (for faculty) or the *Staff and Administrative Handbook* (for staff); and
- Other action appropriate to the research misconduct.

The administrative actions in the case of student researchers may include:

- Withdrawal or correction of all pending or published abstracts and papers emanating from the research where research misconduct was found;
- Removal of the responsible person from the particular project;
- Letter of reprimand;
- Special monitoring of future work;
- Suspension from future Converse research, either for a limited time or permanently;
- Restitution of funds to the grantor agency as appropriate;
- In egregious cases as determined by the DO-RIO, referral of the student to the Converse University Honor Board, as specified in the *Converse University Undergraduate Handbook* in the Section, "Honor System"; and
- Other action appropriate to the research misconduct.

¹Sections of this policy have been taken from or modeled on the Sample Policy and Procedures for Responding to Allegations of Research Misconduct published by the Office of Research Integrity, U.S Department of Health and Human Services, accessed on March 18, 2019, at <https://ori.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/>

[SamplePolicyandProcedures-5-07.pdf](#)

²Section III of this policy has been adapted in part from Clemson University's *Policy for Responding to Allegations of Research Misconduct*, accessed on March 18, 2019, at <http://media.clemson.edu/research/sponsored-programs/policies/research-misconduct.pdf>

³From <https://science.energy.gov/grants/policy-and-guidance/research-misconduct/>, accessed on March 18, 2019.

⁴From <https://science.energy.gov/grants/policy-and-guidance/research-misconduct/>, accessed on March 18, 2019.

Version History

Sun, 08/13/2023 - 21:50

Converse Service Expectations

Responsible Office(s) Human Resources, Provost

Policy Statement

It is the policy of Converse University to encourage and expect each employee of the University to at all times meet and comply with the following Service Expectations:

Caring Attitude

- Welcoming (smiles, friendly)
- Courteous
- Encouraging
- Compassionate
- Considerate of others
- Helpful (patience)

Integrity

- Respectful
- Appropriate confidentiality
- Diligent work ethic
- Trustworthy
- Honest
- Professional

Teamwork

- Reliable
- Shares knowledge
- Willing to help others
- Flexible
- Supportive
- Positive approach

Effective Communication

- Good listener (makes eye contact, attentive)
- Communicates clearly (oral and written)
- Approachable

The statements following each Converse Service Expectation are intended to be examples of the behavior. Additional expectations may be set forth.

Version History

Sun, 08/13/2023 - 21:28

Converse University Sex & Gender Discrimination and Harassment Policy (Title IX)

Policy Owner Office of Diversity and Inclusion
Responsible Office(s) Office of Diversity and Inclusion

Policy Statement

Converse University (“Converse”), in compliance with and as required by Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 and its implementing regulations (“Title IX”) and other civil rights laws, as well as in furtherance of its own values as a higher education institution, does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, pregnancy, disability, age, religion, veteran status, or any other characteristic or status protected by applicable local, state, or federal law in admission, treatment, or access to, or employment in, its programs and activities.

Purpose

Discrimination and harassment are antithetical to the values and standards of the Converse community; are incompatible with the safe, healthy environment that the Converse community expects and deserves; and will not be tolerated. Converse is committed to providing programs, activities, and an education and work environment free from discrimination and harassment and to fostering a community that provides prompt reporting and fair and timely resolution of those behaviors.

Inquiries concerning discrimination or harassment on the basis of sex or gender may be referred to Converse’s Title IX Coordinator. Please see the contact information above.

Inquiries concerning discrimination or harassment based on a protected characteristic or status other than sex or gender may be referred to the Director of Community & Inclusion (for students) or the Director of Human Resources (for employees).

Individuals also may make inquiries regarding discrimination or harassment to the U.S. Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights by contacting the District of Columbia Office, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20202-1475; Phone 800-421-3481; email: OCR@ed.gov.

Scope

This policy applies to any allegation of sex or gender discrimination or harassment made by or against a student or an employee of Converse or a third party, regardless of sex, sexual orientation, sexual identity, gender expression, or gender identity.

The Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedures apply only to allegations of Sexual Harassment in Converse’s Education Program or Activity.

Converse will address allegations of other types of sex or gender discrimination or harassment (i.e., that do not meet the definition of Sexual Harassment) (1) using other student and employee conduct disciplinary procedures deemed appropriate by the Title IX Coordinator in consultation with other Converse administrators; and/or (2) with Supportive Measures.

When Converse has actual knowledge of sexual harassment (or allegations of) in its Education Program or Activity and against a person in the United States, Converse is obligated to respond and to follow Title IX’s specific requirements, which are addressed and incorporated in these Grievance Procedures.

Promptly upon receiving allegations of Sexual Harassment in Converse’s Education Program or Activity and against a person in the United States, the Title IX Coordinator will contact the Complainant to discuss the availability of Supportive Measures with or without the filing of a Formal Complaint and to explain to the Complainant the process for filing a Formal Complaint.

Policy

Note: The full policy can be found on My Converse at [https://my.converse.edu/ICS/Offices/Human_Resources/Title IX.jnz](https://my.converse.edu/ICS/Offices/Human_Resources/Title_IX.jnz). This excerpt serves to provide basic information to students, faculty, and staff. The full policy should be referenced for further information.

Important information for individuals who may be victims of sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking: If you or someone you know may have been a victim of sexual assault or any other type of sexual misconduct, you are encouraged to seek immediate assistance. Assistance can be obtained 24 hours a day, seven days a week from the Residence Director on call at 864.621.7114 or Campus Safety at 864.596.9026.

For additional information for students about seeking medical assistance and emotional support, as well as important resource information, contact a member of the Wellness Center staff at 864.596.9258 or wellnesscenter@converse.edu.

During business hours (8:30 am to 5:00 pm, Monday through Friday), you are also strongly encouraged to contact one of the following individuals:

Title IX Coordinator:	Danielle Stone, MUEd Chief Community and Belonging Officer/ Title IX Coordinator 864.596.9616 Danielle.stone@converse.edu Location: Montgomery 202H
Title IX Deputy Coordinators:	Karen Medlin Case Manager for Student Accessibility 864.596.9027 karen.medlin@converse.edu Location: Montgomery
	Kristin Lacey, MBA VP Operations & Strategic Planning 864.596.9031 kristin.lacey@converse.edu Location: Carnegie

Duties and responsibilities of the Coordinators are to monitor and oversee implementation of Title IX compliance at the University, including coordination of training, education, communication, and administration of procedures for faculty, staff, students, and other members of the University community, such as contract employees, Board members, and auxiliary staff. Complaints regarding discrimination or harassment on the basis of sex or gender, against Converse students, employees, or third-party contractors should be directed to the Title IX Coordinator or Deputy Coordinators listed above.

Version History

Sun, 08/13/2023 - 21:04
Title change

Sexual and Non - Sexual Harassment Policy (Title VII)

Policy Owner Human Resources

Responsible Office(s) Human Resources

Policy

Harassment disrupts the environment the University seeks to maintain. The University is committed to maintaining a working and learning environment that is free from harassment. The University does not approve of harassment of any type within the workplace and will not tolerate the harassment of its employees or students by anyone, including faculty, staff, managers, administrators, customers, vendors, or students. Harassment consists of unwelcome conduct that is based upon an individual's protected status such as race, color, religion, genetic information, sex, pregnancy, national origin, citizenship, disability, veteran status, age, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic protected by law. While all forms of unlawful harassment are prohibited, sexual harassment deserves special mention.

Definition of Sexual Harassment

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) has issued guidelines regarding sexual harassment in the workplace. Under these guidelines, sexual harassment will be treated as unlawful sex discrimination in violation of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended.

"Sexual Harassment" is defined by the EEOC guidelines as follows:

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when: (1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment; (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual; or (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment.

Sexual harassment includes threats or insinuations, either explicitly or implicitly, that an employee's refusal to submit to sexual advances will adversely affect the employee's employment, evaluation, wages, advancement, assigned duties, shifts, or any other conditions of employment.

Sexually harassing conduct at the University, whether committed by faculty, staff, managers, administrators, co-employees, customers, vendors, or students, is prohibited. Such conduct may include, but is not limited to, unwanted sexual flirtations, advances, or propositions; verbal abuse of a sexual nature; unwanted graphic verbal comments about an individual's body; the display in the workplace of inappropriate and sexually suggestive objects, pictures, writing, language or drawings; or unwelcome touching or physical contact. Such conduct, whether committed by persons of the same or opposite sex, is prohibited whether or not it rises to a level that might legally constitute unlawful harassment.

Definition of Non-Sexual Harassment:

Harassment for purposes of this policy is verbal or physical conduct that is derogatory or that shows hostility toward an individual because of his or her race, color, religion, genetic information, sex, pregnancy, national origin, citizenship, disability, veteran status, age, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic protected by law, and that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment. Harassment may include but is not limited to epithets, abusive language, slurs, jokes, or other verbal or physical conduct relating to an individual's race, color, religion, genetic information, sex, pregnancy, national origin, citizenship, disability, veteran status, age, sexual orientation or any other characteristic protected by law.

Commitment to Academic Freedom:

As an academic institution, teaching, doing research, and learning are subject to the protection of "academic freedom." Actions or words used in the context of the academic curriculum and teaching environments that serve legitimate and reasonable educational purposes will not be evaluated as sexual harassment or other unlawful discrimination because of the principles underlying academic freedom.

Responsibility and Complaint Procedure:

Each department head, manager, and supervisor should maintain his or her workplace free from

harassment, sexual harassment, and intimidation. In addition, department heads, managers, and supervisors should discuss this policy with their department members and employees and assure them that they are not required to endure insulting, degrading, or exploitative sexual treatment or unlawful harassment of any type. Department heads, managers, and supervisors must immediately report to their Vice President and the Director of Human Resources any complaints received from employees or students concerning harassment, including, but not limited to, sexual harassment. Department heads, managers, and supervisors must also report to their Vice President or the Director of Human Resources any other potentially harassing conduct or incidents of which they might see, hear, or otherwise become aware.

Any employee or student affected by any type of visual, verbal, or physical harassing conduct, whether from faculty, staff, managers, administrators, customers, vendors, or students, should report the matter to his or her supervisor, a Dean, or the Director of Human Resources. It is your responsibility as an employee or student without fear of reprisal to bring any form of harassment, including, but not limited to, sexual harassment, to the attention of the administration or management. An investigation of the complaint will be handled with confidentiality to the fullest extent possible. Any employee who subjects another to harassment or other inappropriate conduct will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination. Any student who subjects another to harassment or other inappropriate conduct will be subject to disciplinary action, including the possibility of suspension or expulsion from the University. It is the responsibility of the University to make the preponderance of evidence determination of whether harassment actually has occurred and determine what, if any, disciplinary or corrective action will be taken.

If it is determined that an individual willfully made a false accusation of harassment, he or she may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action consistent with current University policies and procedures, up to and including termination of employment, or in the case of a false accusation by a student, suspension or expulsion.

Prohibition Against Retaliation:

The University also prohibits retaliation against the person(s) who, in good faith, bring a complaint of harassment to the administration's

or management's attention. If you believe you have been retaliated against for reporting discrimination or harassment, or for making such a complaint, or for participating in an investigation related to discrimination or harassment, you should immediately report the alleged retaliatory action to the Director of Human Resources or your Vice President.

Version History

Sun, 08/13/2023 - 21:26

Policy for Internet and Social Media Use

Responsible Office(s) Human Resources, Provost, Office of Communications

Policy

Overview

The use of the internet and social media can provide engaging and rewarding ways to connect with family, coworkers, and friends worldwide. The rapid growth and pervasiveness of digital technologies combined with ease of use make them attractive communication channels. However, for entities such as universities with various departmental and program-related accounts, it is critical to differentiate between personal voice and institutional voice in employee posts and be mindful of how all content reflects the institution.

Converse University has adopted the following policies to help employees engage online in respectful, relevant ways that protect both the University and its employees and follow the letter and spirit of the law. The same professional expectations for interacting with students, parents, alumni, donors, media, and other University constituents apply online just as they do in the workplace. Employees are accountable for their posts to social media sites, regardless of whether they intend to speak on behalf of the University.

This policy sets forth the University's expectations regarding employee use of the internet and social media for the official business of Converse University, regarding the University, its schools, departments, offices, and University alumni, students, faculty and staff. For purposes of this policy, "social media" includes all means of communicating or posting information or content of any sort on the Internet, whether or not

associated or affiliated with Converse University, as well as any other form of electronic communication. Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. Disciplinary actions for faculty are administered in accordance with the policies contained in the Faculty Handbook.

Policies for All Employees Regarding Use of Internet and Social Media

Personal Use During Work Hours

Personal use of social media should not conflict with work responsibilities, and thus employees should refrain from using social media and the internet for personal purposes during working time (the time an employee is expected to be working, which does not include rest, meal, and other authorized breaks). Use that interferes with employee performance or that is done during working time is prohibited. Employees may use social media for business purposes during their work hours. Please refer to the University's Acceptable Use Policy in the Employee Handbook for further reference.

Think (and Pause) Before Posting

Privacy does not exist in the world of social media. Be aware that posts are or can easily be made available by forwarding or copying to the public at large, including prospective students, current students, your supervisor, colleagues, and your peers. Additionally, search engines can display posts years after they are created (and even deleted). Consider the impact your post may have on members of the University's constituent groups and how it may reflect on you before publishing. Remember that the University's policies related to workplace behavior and comments are equally applicable to an employee's behavior online. Comments that are discriminatory, harassing, vulgar, obscene, malicious, or threatening in nature are unacceptable, even if the comments are personal and unrelated to Converse's business. If you are unsure about posting something or responding to a comment, you can always ask your supervisor for guidance or contact the Office of Communications.

Share Content Effectively

Maximizing positive visibility for Converse University on the internet and social media is integral to the University's marketing efforts. Employees are encouraged to share University news and events that are a matter of public record with their family and friends and engage with Converse University social media channels

by liking, commenting, and sharing. Linking straight to the information source or sharing directly from official Converse University channels are the most effective ways to share news and direct users back to the Converse.edu website. This also allows Converse to track the reach of posts made to official Converse channels.

Maintain Confidentiality

Use good ethical judgment and follow the University's policies and federal requirements, such as the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) of 1996 and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), when posting online content. Do not post confidential or proprietary information about Converse University, its students, its alumni, or your fellow employees. "Confidential or proprietary information" means (1) competitively sensitive information, (2) of importance to Converse, (3) that is kept in confidence by Converse, (4) that became known to Employee through his or her employment with Converse."

Respect Copyright and Intellectual Property Rights

When posting, comply with all copyright and intellectual property rights laws. Be mindful of the copyrights and intellectual property rights of others and the University.

Be Accurate

Verify that information is correct before posting it on social media. Review for grammatical and spelling errors, and make sure you have appropriate permissions if writing about or sharing images of people or organizations. This is especially important if you are posting on behalf of the University.

Seek Guidance for News Media Interaction

Social media content may generate interest from the news media (print, television, radio, online). If the media contact you about a University-related posting and the media is seeking information or a statement on behalf of the University, contact the media relations director in the Office of Communications immediately for guidance before responding.

Maintain Transparency

The line between professional and personal business is sometimes blurred, which is inherent to the nature of social media. The best approach is to be thoughtful about your content and potential audiences. Be clear about your identity. In personal posts, you may identify yourself as a

Converse faculty or staff member. However, please be clear that you are sharing your views as an individual, not as a representative of Converse University. If you identify yourself as a member of the Converse community, ensure your profile and related content are consistent with how you wish to present yourself to colleagues, just as you would in any other public arena. Never post information or content expressly or impliedly on behalf of the University without the express permission to do so from the media relations director in the Office of Communications.

Be Thoughtful in Making Social Media Connections

Be thoughtful in your decision to "friend," "like," "follow," or "connect," or before accepting such requests. It is important to recognize that there is the potential for misinterpretation of relationships such as faculty-student, supervisor-subordinate, and staff-student in social interactions. If you are in doubt, please contact Human Resources.

Follow Terms of Service

Obey the Terms of Service of any social media platform you use.

Policies for Employees Contributing to Social Media on Behalf of Converse University

Employees who use social media on behalf of Converse University in any capacity must adhere to the following guidelines in addition to all guidelines above.

Posting to social media on behalf of Converse is an important responsibility. Employees with administrative or editorial access to Converse-related usernames are content creators that immediately and directly reflect on the University. Discuss with your supervisor the circumstances in which you are empowered to respond directly to users and when you may need approval.

Converse University Official Accounts

The University's primary, official online channels, including www.converse.edu, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and any other online presence established with the sole name of "Converse University," is maintained by the Office of Communications. Social media accounts representing Converse offices, departments, schools, etc., should bear the name of the specific program or department (e.g., "Converse University MFA"), with graphics and

content that are clearly related to the particular department rather than the institution as a whole. Please reference the Branding & Visual Identity Guide on the Communications section of my.converse.

Managing Administrative Access and Transitions

All University-affiliated social media accounts must grant administrative privileges to the Office of Communications. This does not involve sharing access to your personal social media account, even if you are the creator of the Converse-related account. Sharing administrative rights with the Office of Communications does not mean that Communications will manage or contribute to the account in any way; rather, this provides security in maintaining and transitioning ownership of the account in the future.

Administrative roles must be updated immediately when employees who have editorial or administrative access to social media accounts no longer require access to these accounts. Be mindful of the roles attributed to student workers, employees transitioning to new roles on campus, and those who have left the University.

Process for Creating a Converse University Social Media Presence

To ensure that your social media efforts adhere to the branding and policy standards of Converse University (find the Branding & Visual Identity Guide in the Communications section of My.Converse), new University-affiliated social media accounts must be created in collaboration with the Office of Communications. To initiate this process, contact communications@converse.edu.

Plan, Commit, and Engage Your Audience

- Assign a member of your team to regularly monitor postings and content.
- Create a **content calendar** with pre-planned content for slow periods. Aim for high traffic times for postings and updates.
- Consider managing social platforms with a free **Hootsuite account** to communicate with multiple administrators and monitor communications from students and/or the public.
- While the recommended minimum frequency for posting is twice a week, be sure not to overload your followers with updates.

- Keep it conversational—post or share content that engages your audience to communicate back with you and with one another.
- Social media can be a powerful tool to drive audiences to the Converse.edu website for more information. Whenever possible, link back to a specific post or page on the Converse website (a news story, academic page, calendar event, etc.).

Compliance with University Policies

Communication on social media sites for University purposes must comply with all applicable University policies. Converse University has the right to deactivate any University-affiliated account based on violations of the Policy for Internet and Social Media Use.

Stagnant Accounts

The Office of Communications may disable or temporarily unpublish any University social media accounts that are dormant (no posts, no activity) for more than six months, as such stagnancy reflects poorly on the University. Your department will be notified before a page you manage is disabled.

Things to Consider When Planning to Create a New Social Media Account on Behalf of Converse University

- **How can social media help my department meet its goals?**
 - What is your objective for using social media? Is it to inform, share information, gain feedback, and/or engage with your audience? Knowing your goals will help you decide where to establish accounts, what information to share, and who you will reach.
 - It may be easier and more effective to meet social media goals in many cases by contributing to a related, established account within the Converse community.
- **Who are our audiences? Is social media the appropriate channel for reaching them?**
 - Are there other channels that might be more effective? It's important to first determine where and if your audience is active on social media channels.
- **Do we have the resources for content development, execution, and maintenance?**
 - Consider the time and personnel you will need to maintain social media efforts beyond the initial start-up phase.

What you share on social media will reflect on your department or unit and influence how others see you, so be prepared to share relevant and consistent content and respond to users often.

- If you're not able to maintain an engaging social media presence, consider developing relevant content for Converse University accounts with established audiences already in place (e.g., departmental sites).

The Office of Communications is available to support and assist you in your social media efforts on behalf of Converse University. For questions or help with your Converse-related accounts, contact communications@converse.edu.

Version History

Sun, 08/13/2023 - 21:29

Hazing Policy

Policy Owner Campus Safety

Responsible Office(s) Campus Safety

Policy Statement

Converse University seeks to promote a safe environment where all community members may participate in activities and organizations without compromising their health, safety, or welfare. Hazing can result in harm to victims, their families, and the University community; therefore, Converse strictly prohibits hazing.

Purpose

This policy defines hazing and outlines the procedures for reporting and addressing hazing.

Scope

This policy applies to all Converse University Students, Employees, and Organizations.

Policy

Hazing includes any act that threatens or inflicts physical, emotional, or psychological pressure or injury on an individual, or that purposely humiliates, demeans, degrades, or disgraces an individual. Hazing is prohibited by the University's Code of Student Conduct and is a crime in the State of South Carolina under South Carolina Code 16-3-510.

No individual shall directly engage in hazing or indirectly encourage, aid, or assist any other person in hazing. All students and University representatives, including employees, must immediately report known or suspected hazing violations as directed herein.

An individual (whether individually or in concert with other person(s)) commits hazing by intentionally, knowingly, recklessly or negligently causing, coercing or forcing another individual regardless of the apparent willingness or consent of such other individual to engage in or endure any of the acts listed below under the definition of hazing for the purpose of pre-initiation or pre-pledging activities, pledging, initiating, holding office, admitting or affiliating into or with an organization or for the purpose of continuing, reinstating, or enhancing an individual's association, participation, membership or status with an Organization.

Exceptions: This policy does not prohibit:

1. Customary University-sponsored athletic events, contests, or competitions;
2. Activities or conduct furthering the goals of a legitimate educational curriculum, extracurricular program, or military training program;
3. Rights protected under the U.S. Constitution or other federal law;
4. University-sanctioned academic research involving human subjects.

Reporting

Anyone who believes they have witnessed or experienced hazing, or who is aware of a potential hazing incident, should report the matter immediately. All faculty, staff, volunteers and independent contractors are mandatory reporters of hazing. Reports can be made to:

- The Office of the Dean of Students: 864-596-9016
- Title IX Coordinator: titleix@converse.edu
- Human Resources: hr@converse.edu
- Campus Safety: 864-596-9026 or via email at campussafety@converse.edu

- Online Confidential Reporting:
<https://converse.guardianconduct.com/incident-reporting/new>

Converse University takes all reports of hazing seriously. Reports will remain confidential to the extent required by law.

Investigative Process

When a hazing incident is reported, the University will:

- Conduct a thorough investigation led and/or coordinated by the Student Conduct office to include (as relevant) interviews of potentially involved parties, social media reviews, camera footage reviews, and other means of gathering information;
- Collaborate with organization national headquarters, campus security authorities, and/or local law enforcement as necessary;
- Provide appropriate interim measures, resources, and support for affected individuals; and
- Hold individuals and/or organizations at the university found responsible accountable pursuant to the Code of Student Conduct, the Student Organizations Handbook, Athletics Policies and procedures, policy manuals and/or other University policies as applicable.
- Note: When the conduct of employees is under investigation, Human Resources will be notified and participate in the process.

Annual Reporting and Transparency

To comply with the [Stop Campus Hazing Act](#), Converse will disclose all hazing incidents reported to campus security authorities or local law enforcement in its Annual Security and Fire Safety Report. The report will include:

- Policies regarding hazing, including procedures for reporting, investigating, and responding to incidents;
- A description of hazing prevention and awareness programs offered by the University;
- A Campus Hazing Transparency Report, summarizing findings from investigations involving any student organization found to have violated hazing policies; and
- Such other information as may be required by law or regulation.

Sanctions

- Students: Sanctions may include probation, suspension, expulsion, degree revocation, restricted access, interim measures, and educational interventions.
- Organizations: Sanctions may include suspension or revocation of recognition, denial of registration, and loss of privileges.
- Employees: Any employee found to be knowledgeable about hazing who did not report it to their supervisor and/or any of the persons or organizations set forth above under the heading REPORTING HAZING, or who played any active role in facilitating or participating in hazing, will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action which may include written warnings, reprimands, suspension, demotion, probation, dismissal and/or referral for criminal prosecution under state law.

Retaliation

Any organization, individual student, or employee who retaliates against anyone for reporting hazing, cooperating with an investigation, or otherwise participating in enforcement of this policy is also subject to all the applicable sanctions set forth in this policy.

Related Resources

SC Code of Laws
Federal Law on Hazing
SC Anti Hazing Law
Converse University Campus Hazing Transparency Report
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1_PsUmxRdtdrsDjj5rjiFQHR-OFaF84uXWrH3Dt2HIYU...

Definitions and Acronyms

Employee: All University employees, including faculty, adjuncts, staff, graduate assistants/associates, and student workers, whether full-time, part-time, under contract, permanent, or temporary.

Hazing: Any intentional, knowing, reckless, or negligent act committed against a Student, regardless of the Student's apparent consent, in connection with joining, maintaining, or advancing membership in an organization, that creates or contributes to a risk of harm. Examples include but are not limited to:

- Physical assaults (whipping, beating, striking, shocking, or harmful substances applied to the body).
- Sleep deprivation, exposure to the elements, confinement, or extreme physical activity.
- Forced consumption of food, liquid, alcohol, drugs, or other substances.
- Interference with academics.
- Coerced sexual acts or simulations.
- Personal servitude.
- Humiliation or intimidation.
- Line-ups or interrogations unrelated to legitimate educational purposes.
- Abuse of authority.
- Kidnapping, false imprisonment, or other criminal acts.
- Acts requiring violations of the University Code of Conduct or law.

Note: This list does not and cannot encompass every circumstance that will cause the University to discipline a Student, Organization or Employee for Hazing. Actual physical harm is not required for an action to be found to be Hazing. Actual harm is not required for conduct to be hazing. Consent is not a defense.

Organization: Any group affiliated with the University whose membership consists primarily of Students, including athletic teams, clubs, student government, fraternities, sororities, ensembles, and similar groups. Organizations include but are not limited to programs, activities, [KD1] associations, clubs, cooperatives, corps, orders, and societies such as an athletic team, club sports team, band, ensemble, choral group, or orchestra, student government, fraternity, sorority, or another similar group.

Student: Any person who is enrolled at the University, any person who has been accepted for enrollment at the University, any person who intends to enroll at the University within the next twelve (12) calendar months, or any person who meets the definition of “Student” for the purpose of the University Student Code of Conduct. A person who meets the definition of “Student” under this Policy shall continue to be defined as a Student until the person is enrolled, graduates, transfers, or withdraws from the University. This definition applies specifically to this policy.

Contractor: An individual or organization providing goods or services to the University under contract.

Volunteer: An individual who freely offers services without compensation to support the University’s activities and mission.

Version History

Mon, 08/25/2025 - 09:57
TLC
Original Version

Campus Technology

Accidental Damage and Theft or Loss of Company-owned Devices

Policy Owner Campus Technology
Responsible Office(s) Campus Technology, Human Resources

Policy Statement

The policy applies to all faculty, staff, adjunct, and consultant roles.

Purpose

1.0 Purpose

This policy outlines the procedures and guidelines for handling accidental damage, theft, and loss of company-owned devices, including but not limited to laptops, smartphones, tablets, and other electronic equipment.

Scope

2.0 Covered Devices

This policy applies to all electronic devices owned or leased by the company and issued to employees for work-related purposes. This includes, but is not limited to, laptops, desktop computers, smartphones, tablets, and any other electronic equipment designated for business use.

Policy

4.0 Reporting Procedures

4.1 Accidental Damage:

Employees are required to report any accidental damage to company devices immediately to their supervisor and Campus Technology. The report should include details of the incident, the extent of damage, and any relevant circumstances surrounding the event.

4.2 Theft/Loss:

In the case of theft or loss, employees must:

- Report the incident to their supervisor and Campus Technology immediately.
- File a police report if the equipment was stolen (applicable for off-campus theft).
- File a report with Campus Safety if the equipment was stolen (applicable for on-campus theft only).

5.0 Assessment and Repair (Accidental Damage)

Upon receiving a report of accidental damage, the Campus Technology team will assess the extent of damage and determine the appropriate course of action. This may involve repair, replacement, or other remedial measures as deemed necessary.

6.0 Responsibility for Damages and Departmental Chargeback

Employees are responsible for exercising reasonable care when utilizing company devices. Accidental damage charges incurred as a result of negligence or misuse will be charged back to the user's departmental budget. The department head or designated budget manager will be responsible for approving and allocating funds for such charges.

7.0 Exclusions

This policy does not cover damages resulting from:

- Intentional misuse
- Negligence
- Unauthorized alterations to company devices

Employees found to be in violation of company policies or engaged in willful misconduct may be held liable for the cost of repairs or replacement.

8.0 Return of Lost or Stolen Devices

If a device that was reported lost or stolen is recovered, the employee must immediately return it to the Campus Technology department for security checks, and data wiping.

9.0 Compliance

All employees are expected to comply with the provisions of this policy and any related procedures or guidelines established by the company.

10.0 Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure its effectiveness and relevance to the needs of the organization. Any updates or revisions to the policy will be communicated to all employees in a timely manner.

11.0 Conclusion

Accidental damage, theft, and loss of company devices can disrupt business operations and incur significant costs. By adhering to the procedures outlined in this policy, employees can help mitigate risks and ensure the timely resolution of any incidents involving company-owned electronic equipment.

Definitions and Acronyms

3.0 Definitions

- **Accidental Damage:** Any unforeseen event resulting in physical harm or impairment to a device, including but not limited to drops, spills, impacts, and other unintentional incidents.
- **Theft:** The unauthorized taking of a company device with the intent to deprive the company of it.

- **Loss:** The unintentional placement of a company device in a location unknown to the employee.

Version History

Mon, 08/26/2024 - 21:59
TLC

Electronic Communications

Policy Owner Campus Technology

Policy

The University maintains standards of conduct that apply to all employees. The violation of certain standards may result in suspension or dismissal. These violations include such things as the misuse of computer data, software, or electronic mail; unauthorized attempts to access or copy computerized data or software; unlawful use or copying of copyrighted materials, breach of software confidentiality and ownership agreements.

Converse University's telephone service and electronic mail are provided for the purpose of conducting University business. Personal use of telephones and electronic mail should be restricted to incidental and emergency use. Employees must pay any charges related to personal calls to the appropriate departmental administrator. Reimbursement of personal charges is required.

The University may access its electronic communications system and obtain the communications within the system, without notice to users of the system, in the ordinary course of business when the University deems it appropriate to do so. The reasons for which the University may obtain such access include, but are not limited to: maintaining the system; preventing or investigating allegations of system abuse or misuse; assuring compliance with software copyright laws; complying with legal and regulatory requests for information; and ensuring that the University's operations continue appropriately during an employee's absence.

The University may store electronic communications for a period of time after the communication is created. From time to time, copies of communications may be deleted.

The University's guideline prohibiting harassment, in its entirety, applies to the use of the University's electronic communications system. No one may use electronic communications in a manner that may be construed by others as harassment or offensive based on race, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, religious beliefs, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state, or local laws.

Since the University's electronic communications system is for University business use only, the system may not be used to solicit for religious or political causes, outside organizations, or other personal matters unrelated to the University.

No one may access, or attempt to obtain access to, another's electronic communications without appropriate authorization.

The proper use of electronic mail should be the subject of careful judgment. Misconduct of any kind will be met with appropriate disciplinary action. Employees found in violation of these guidelines shall be subject to disciplinary action from the University according to approved faculty and staff procedures.

Version History

Sun, 08/13/2023 - 21:57

Computer Systems Security

Policy

All servers (computer systems) at Converse University that have files and programs stored on them shall be considered confidential, private, and the property of the University. All users are given their own network storage space, which they may use for storing document files as well as other directories assigned according to their needs.

Campus Technology is responsible for safeguarding the confidentiality and privacy of the programs and files on the servers and personal computers. This responsibility is to be shared by all users.

All faculty, staff, and students are given a unique user identification and password known only to that user. Each user will be held responsible for all activities attributed to that user identification. Therefore, no user shall share their password with

others. Users are to use passwords that are difficult to guess and are to change their passwords frequently.

The absence of security protection on a file or resource shall not imply permission to access that file or resource.

Everyone must ensure that all reasonable measures are taken to restrict access to files containing confidential information and that all applicable laws and standards are followed.

Campus Technology may implement security procedures that require users to choose passwords that are difficult to guess and can force a user to change them at a given interval.

Campus Technology must be notified by the Human Resources Office immediately upon the termination of an employee or by the Registrar's Office of a change in student status of any individual that has access to Converse University computer systems. This notification may allow for the deletion of the stated person's user account, thus protecting the security of Converse University computer systems and files.

These guidelines shall apply to all programs and data files within any computer system, whether the files belong to a student, faculty member, staff member, or any other member of the Converse University community.

Anyone who has knowledge of an attempt by anyone to violate these guidelines shall make known this violation to Campus Technology, who will take this information to the Vice President for Finance and Business.

Any person guilty of violating the security of any files or programs shall be subject to disciplinary action by the University.

Version History

Sun, 08/13/2023 - 21:58

Password Policy

Policy Owner Campus Technology

Responsible Office(s) Campus Technology

Purpose

This policy establishes conditions for use, and requirements for appropriate creation and management of Converse University system passwords.

Scope

This policy applies to anyone who has a user account with Converse University.

Policy

In order to protect the integrity of Converse University systems and users, it is necessary to create a password that would be difficult for someone to guess in an effort to gain unauthorized access to a user's Converse University account and systems.

A password must be:

1. At least twelve (12) characters in length
 2. At least one (1) must be numbers
 3. At least one (1) must be a capital letter
 4. At least one (1) must be a lowercase letter.
 5. At least one (1) special character (!@#\$%^&*)
 6. It must be significantly different from the 6 previous passwords.
 7. It cannot be the same as the user ID.
 8. It should not be information easily obtainable about the user.
 9. Safeguarded by not storing it in a public place where others might acquire it.
 10. Must never be communicated in email or text conversation.
- Passwords should not be shared, including to Campus Technology.
- All use of a Converse University account is to be performed by the person assigned to that account. Account owners are held responsible for all activities associated with their accounts.
- Any violations of standards, procedures, or guidelines pursuant to this policy may result in Campus Technology locking your account and subject to possible disciplinary action.

If you have lost or forgotten your password, please visit <https://my.converse.edu>.

Version History

Fri, 08/18/2023 - 12:55

TLC

Password requirement

General Guidelines, and Compliance

Americans with Disabilities Act (and Related State and Local Laws)

Policy Owner Human Resources

Responsible Office(s) Human Resources

Policy Statement

The university acknowledges disability as a component of an inclusive environment and is committed to promoting a culture of accessibility and respect. It is the policy of Converse University to:

- Ensure that no qualified individual is denied the benefits of, or excluded from participation in, any program or activity because of a disability;
- Provide reasonable accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids and services to qualified employees with disabilities, unless doing so would result in undue hardship or fundamentally alter the nature of a service, program, or activity;
- Promote accessibility in physical spaces, technologies, communications, and services; and
- Protect against retaliation for individuals who request accommodations, file grievances, or otherwise exercise their rights under disability law.
- The university is committed to ongoing efforts to remove barriers, improve accessibility, and support a welcoming environment for all members of the campus community.

Purpose

Converse University is committed to equal opportunity and full inclusion for individuals with disabilities in accordance with the federal laws, Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the ADA Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA), and applicable provisions of South Carolina Human Affairs Law (Title 1, Chapter 13 of the South Carolina Code of Laws). Discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities is prohibited in all aspects of employment and educational programs.

Scope

This policy applies to all members of the Converse University community, including but not limited to:

- **Faculty and staff** (full-time, part-time, and adjunct)

Policy

Converse University complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and similar state and local laws by not discriminating against qualified individuals with disabilities. Converse also limits the instances in which it seeks medical information from employees and keeps that medical information confidential (on a need-to-know basis). Finally, where appropriate, the University offers reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with disabilities, provided the employee is able to perform the essential functions of the position, and those accommodations do not create an undue hardship for Converse or pose a threat to health or safety. Accommodations are those changes, modifications, or alterations that allow an otherwise qualified employee to enjoy the benefits of working and perform all essential functions of his or her position, notwithstanding a physical or mental impairment. Accommodations may be in the form of changes in the workplace, leave, or reassignment to vacant positions. Individuals seeking accommodations will be required to provide documentation of their disability status and any associated abilities or restrictions. Failure to cooperate with the University's efforts to reach a reasonable accommodation will result in the denial of protection under the applicable law. If two or more accommodations are reasonable and effective, the University reserves the right to decide which accommodation to implement.

Accommodation Leave under the ADA (and similar laws)

Accommodation leave applies only to employees who: (1) do not meet the eligibility requirements under FMLA or who have exhausted FMLA leave; (2) are under the care of a licensed healthcare provider (practicing within the terms of his or her license); and, (3) are currently unable to perform one or more essential functions of their position, with or without accommodations. If Converse crafts an accommodation for the employee that would allow him or her to perform the position's

essential functions even with the current medical restrictions, then leave under this policy will be unavailable.

To obtain leave under this policy, the employee must cooperate with Converse to obtain medical information substantiating: (1) the nature of impairment; (2) the functions the employee cannot perform; (3) the amount of time the employee will have the restrictions; (4) an estimated return-to-work date; (5) the level of confidence of the physician; and (6) estimated restrictions that will still exist after the employee is released to return to work.

Leave under this policy is discretionary. Converse will attempt to balance the employee's need for leave, the effectiveness of granting the leave, the reasonableness of the length of time requested, and the level of confidence of the physician on the one hand, with the needs of the organization and the hardship, posed to the University in granting the leave on the other hand. If the leave is granted, it will be job-protected.

Employees must concurrently exhaust any available paid time off (such as vacation, sick pay, or personal time off), Converse Leave benefits, Family Medical Leave, short-term disability benefits, workers' compensation benefits, or any other form of applicable paid leave during ADA leave. If no such paid time off is available, leave under this policy is unpaid and runs concurrently with any other Converse Leave and/or Family Medical Leave benefits.

If the employee requests an extension of leave, if the circumstances described by the original certification have changed significantly, or if the University receives information that casts doubt upon the continuing validity of the original certification, the University may require immediate recertification of the employee's medical condition.

If the employee recovers sooner than anticipated, the employee must communicate with Converse and make arrangements to return to work.

Leaves under this policy must be used for their intended purpose. If Converse determines that the employee provided false information in order to obtain the leave or is using leave when such leave is not medically necessary or otherwise unnecessary, the employee may be subject to discipline, up to and including termination.

Reasonable Accommodation

Converse University will provide reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with known disabilities, enabling them to perform the essential functions of their job or access educational programs and services, unless doing so would impose an undue hardship or pose a direct threat.

Examples of reasonable accommodations include, but are not limited to the following:

- Modified work schedules or job duties
- Accessible facilities
- Auxiliary aids and services
- Assistive technology
- Interpreters or readers

The examples provided in the above terms are not meant to be all-inclusive and should not be construed as such. They are not the only conditions that are considered to be disabilities, impairments, or reasonable accommodations covered by the ADA/ADAAA policy. South Carolina law prohibits discrimination based on disability and requires public and private entities to make reasonable accommodations, unless doing so would impose a significant difficulty or expense. The **South Carolina Human Affairs Commission (SCHAC)** is the agency responsible for enforcing South Carolina's anti-discrimination laws.

Retaliation Prohibited

Retaliation against individuals who request accommodations, file complaints, or participate in investigations is strictly prohibited under both federal and South Carolina law.

Grievances and Complaints

Individuals who believe they have been discriminated against based on a disability may file a complaint with:

- Converse University Human Resources Department
hr@converse.edu
Director of Human Resources
- The **South Carolina Human Affairs Commission (SCHAC)**
Website: <https://www.schac.sc.gov>
Phone: 1-800-521-0725

- The **U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)**
Website: <https://www.eeoc.gov>
Phone: 1-800-669-4000

Policy Review and Updates

This policy is reviewed periodically to ensure compliance with evolving federal and state regulations and to maintain an inclusive campus environment.

Related Resources

EEOC Fact Sheet Disability Discrimination
 Introduction to the Americans with Disabilities Act
 Notice Concerning The Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) Amendments Act of 2...

Definitions and Acronyms

- **Disability:** A physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities of the individual, a record of such an impairment, or being regarded as having such an impairment.
- **Major life activities (but not limited to):** These include caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating, and working.
- **Major bodily functions (but are not limited to):** Body systems such as neurological, musculoskeletal, special sense organs, respiratory (including speech organs), cardiovascular, reproductive, digestive, genitourinary, immune, circulatory, hemic, lymphatic, skin and endocrine that could be affected by a physical or mental impairment such as any physiological disorder or condition, cosmetic disfigurement or anatomical loss affecting one or more.
- **Other impairments:** Also covered are any mental or psychological disorders, such as intellectual disability, organic brain syndrome, emotional or mental illness, and specific learning disabilities.
- **Substantially limiting:** In accordance with the ADAAA final regulations, determining whether an impairment substantially limits a major life activity requires an individualized assessment, and an impairment that is episodic or in remission may also meet the definition of disability if it would substantially limit a major life activity when active. These types of impairments may include asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, hypertension, major depressive disorder, bipolar disorder, and schizophrenia. An impairment, such as cancer that is in remission but that may possibly return in a substantially limiting form, is also considered a disability under the final ADAAA regulations.
- **Direct threat:** A significant risk to the health, safety, or well-being of other individuals.
- **Qualified individual:** An individual who, with or without reasonable accommodation, can perform the essential functions of the employment position that such individual holds or desires.
- **Reasonable accommodation:** Includes any changes to the work environment and may include making existing facilities readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities; job restructuring; offering part-time or modified work schedules; working remotely; reassignment to a position; acquiring or modifying equipment or devices; appropriate adjustment or modifications of examinations, training materials or policies; providing qualified readers or interpreters; and other similar accommodations for individuals with disabilities. vacant
- **Undue hardship:** Significant difficulty or expense that would be incurred by the employer if an accommodation were implemented. In determining whether an accommodation would impose an undue hardship on a covered entity, factors to consider include: The nature and cost of the accommodation.
 - The overall financial resources of the facility or facilities involved in providing the reasonable accommodation, the number of persons employed at such facility, the effect on expenses and resources, or the impact of such accommodation on the operation of the facility.
 - The overall financial resources of the employer, the size, number, type, and location of facilities.
 - The type of operations of the company, including the composition, structure and functions of the workforce; administrative or fiscal relationship of the particular facility involved in making the accommodation to the employee.

- **Essential functions of the job:** Job activities that the employer determines are essential or core to performing the job; these functions cannot be modified.

Version History

Tue, 09/05/2023 - 21:33

Definitions added, Clarification regarding reasonable accommodation, policy review, prohibition of retaliation, and grievances/complaints guidance.

Background Investigations

Policy Owner Human Resources

Responsible Office(s) Human Resources

Policy

THE LANGUAGE USED IN THIS DOCUMENT DOES NOT CREATE AN EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT BETWEEN THE EMPLOYEE AND CONVERSE UNIVERSITY. THE DOCUMENT DOES NOT CREATE ANY CONTRACTUAL RIGHTS OR ENTITLEMENTS. CONVERSE UNIVERSITY RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REVISE THE CONTENT OF THIS DOCUMENT IN WHOLE OR IN PART AT ANY TIME WITH NO PRIOR NOTICE. NO PROMISES OR ASSURANCES, WHETHER WRITTEN OR ORAL, WHICH ARE CONTRARY TO OR INCONSISTENT WITH THE TERMS OF THIS DOCUMENT CREATE ANY CONTRACT OF EMPLOYMENT.

Criminal Background Investigation Policy

Converse University is committed to hiring qualified employees and providing a safe and secure environment for our students and employees. To that end, criminal background checks will be conducted for all faculty, staff, and student employees to whom job offers are made, and new and current volunteers providing services on behalf of the University who meet the criteria outlined below.

Converse will also verify a candidate's educational qualifications and maintain these verifications as part of the employee record during the background check process. Additionally, a motor vehicle report may be required for any employee who will operate a Converse University vehicle or who will operate a vehicle regularly in the course and scope of his/her employment with Converse. Reviewing MVR data is an annual requirement.

All employees may be subject to background checks at least every five years as a condition of continued employment in accordance with the procedure listed below for candidates. The failure to consent to the background check, including the execution of all documents necessary to allow the check, is grounds for termination of employment.

A criminal background investigation will be performed for any individual who meets any one of the following descriptions:

- Candidates selected to fill a position.
- Individuals who are being considered for reemployment.
- Individuals who have a lapse of employment for one year (rolling calendar year) or greater from the last day worked.
- Student employees working with or having access to minors or children who are less than 16 years of age.
- Employees working with or having access to minors who are not enrolled as students of the University must have a criminal background check at least once every two years.
- Internal employees changing positions at the University due to a promotion, lateral transfer, demotion, or who have been assigned Sensitive Duties.
- Individuals who volunteer as part of a University-sponsored summer camp or program offered to minors. At a minimum, University-sponsored summer camps or programs must comply with criminal background checks every two years for returning volunteers. The Coordinator of such camps or programs will work with the Payroll Administrator and Director of Human Resources to ensure proper communication of new/returning personnel.
- For any employee or volunteer who has been convicted of a misdemeanor, felony, or other offense of moral turpitude or for any crime as listed below.
- Any current employee who reports a criminal charge or conviction as listed below.
- In addition, the University may perform background checks every three years or less as circumstances dictate for employees assigned Sensitive Duties.

Exception:

- Faculty members under consideration for reappointment, promotion to a new

professional rank, departmental chair position, or the conferral of permanent tenure.

In accordance with the procedure listed below and EEOC Enforcement guidance, any employee (including faculty, staff, and student-employees) charged or convicted of an unlawful offense (excluding minor traffic violations) must report such charge or conviction to Human Resources within three days of such charge or conviction, regardless of when or where such a conviction occurs. The charges or convictions which must be reported include, but are not limited to:

- DUI/DWI,
- Any drug or alcohol-related offenses,
- Offenses related to child molestation, child pornography, indecency with a minor, or other sexual offenses,
- Crimes of violence as defined in the United States Code, [Title 18, Part 1, Chapter 1, Section 16](#), including domestic abuse, or any crime of violence as defined by the [South Carolina Statutes](#),
- Fraud, theft, burglary, robbery, or any misuse of money, funds, credit, or government property and/or,
- Invasion of privacy, identity theft, or stalking, or
- Contempt of court that results in incarceration.

Failure to report any charges or convictions could lead to disciplinary consequences up to and including termination. If a charge or conviction is properly reported, a review of the occurrence will determine if further actions are necessary.

Confidentiality and Retention of Background Check Records

Employment-related background checks are considered part of the personnel file and are not subject to public release except as required or allowed under applicable provisions of state law. Background check records generated under this policy will be maintained in accordance with the Retention of Documents Policy- *Administrative and Staff Handbook*.

Definitions

For the purpose of this Policy, the following definitions apply:

1. **"Charge"** means an accusation of a crime by a formal complaint, information, or indictment.
2. **"Conviction"** means guilty verdict, guilty plea, and Alford or Kennedy plea, a plea of 'no contest,' or any other resolution that is the functional equivalent of a judgment, including probation before judgment and deferred prosecution.
3. **"Employee"** means any individual regardless of whether they are employed by the University in a permanent, temporary, contract, or consulting position.
4. **"Sensitive Duties"** are identified by Risk Management, Safety and Security, VP for Finance & Business/CFO/Controller, Facilities Management, VP Institutional Advancement, CIO, Vice President for Operations and Strategic Planning, and Human Resources. Sensitive Duties include:
 - a. Direct responsibility for the care, safety, and security of non-student minors.
 - b. Direct access to or responsibility for cash, cash equivalents, or credit card information. University property disbursements or receipts, or extensive authority for committing the financial resources of the University.
 - c. Direct access to or responsibility for the safety, security, intellectual property, information technology, or areas designed by the University as safety or security sensitive.
 - d. Master key access to a building, residence halls, or other secure facilities. Electronic access and areas requiring a high level of security, such as those that store money, research facilities, etc.

Procedure for Background Checks

The State Law Enforcement Division (SLED) and/or an outside vendor with whom the University has contracted, hereafter referred to as the Background Investigator, will conduct the criminal background checks with a Human Resources staff member. The University will ensure that all background checks are conducted in compliance with applicable federal and state statutes, including but not limited to the Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA), Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, and Converse University's Equal Employment Selection Procedures -Section I-A of Employee Handbook.

Prior to conducting a criminal background check, a consent form to conduct the check must be obtained from the candidate. Additionally,

candidates will be asked to disclose any convictions other than minor traffic violations. The form will be kept in strict confidence in the Human Resources Office. The Background Investigator will conduct an investigation in the state(s) in which the applicant has lived and/or worked for at least seven (7) years to determine whether there is any criminal conviction that could affect the hiring decision, as well as other key criminal background checks and will perform a national sex offender list background check.

An offer letter may be extended with a conditional offer “contingent on favorable results from the criminal background check.” If a candidate did not disclose a criminal record, finding, or judgment on the application or during the search process and the candidate is later found to have such a record, finding, or judgment, then an offer of employment may be rescinded, or the employment may be terminated without any additional due process or hearing considerations, regardless of tenure status. Additionally, the employee may be disqualified from future employment by Converse.

If a conviction is detected during the background check process, the hiring official and the hiring official's supervisor, in consultation with the Human Resources Director or designee, will make the determination of fitness for employment. A conviction itself does not constitute an automatic bar to employment. Factors to be considered in determining fitness for employment include, but are not limited to, the relevance of the conviction to the position sought, the time that has elapsed since the problem occurred, and evidence of rehabilitation.

If an adverse hiring decision is made based in whole or part due to the information contained in the criminal background report, a notification letter and a summary of the applicant's rights under the Fair Credit Reporting Act will be mailed to the applicant.

An applicant's criminal conviction report is confidential personnel information, and all parties having knowledge of any of the content therein will maintain it as confidential.

Version History

Sun, 08/13/2023 - 21:33

Business and Travel Policy

Policy Owner Office of Finance and Business

Policy Statement

Converse University is committed to establishing and maintaining an environment that embraces the highest standards of ethical conduct and behavior. As stewards of its resources and reputation, faculty and staff share an important responsibility for upholding the standards of excellence that define the University and strengthen the community's trust and confidence in its integrity.

This policy has been established to ensure the best possible use of the University's resources, manage expenditures, cost-effective travel, and prompt reimbursement of those expenses incurred by University employees for University business.

Questions pertaining to the policy should be directed to your supervisor, a division Vice President, or to the Controller of Converse University. It is the responsibility of the Controller and the Vice President for Finance and Business, in conjunction with the President as needed, to update this policy.

Scope

This policy applies to all employees of Converse University for expenses to be reimbursed by the University. It is the responsibility of each employee to comply with the Converse University Business Expense and Travel Policy. Supervisors are responsible for authorizing expenses, reviewing and approving reimbursements in compliance with the University Business Expense and Travel Policy, and verifying that the expenses are within budgetary constraints.

Policy

A. Cash/Expense Advances

The following criteria must be met in order to receive a cash advance:

- Must include supporting documentation with the employee name, business purpose, and proper approval
- If the request is for a Travel/Cash Advance, documentation must include conference registration if applicable and a list of travelers in addition to the employee name, business purpose, and proper approval

Note that cash advances are not allowed for hotel reservations. These should be made using a University Corporate credit card or a personal credit card.

Advances drawn for the subsequent distribution to members of a University group (student/athletic group) should be acknowledged by each individual (i.e., the Office of Accounting and Administration should receive a form listing individual, the amount received with their signatures acknowledging receipt). In the event the vendor is paid directly for the entire group, the vendor receipt with the number of people in the group is sufficient.

In order to prevent the loss of receipts, we request that all documentation be taped onto 8 ½ x 11 paper.

For Settlement/Reimbursement, the Office of Finance and Business needs a valid check request, expense reimbursement form, or a petty cash reimbursement request (up to \$75) as soon as possible and no later than 30 days after the expense has been made. The form must include:

- Employee name, business purpose, proper approval, and if for travel or mileage, reason, and details for the trip. If a group travels, a list of names must also be included. **Expense reports lacking any of this information will be returned for correction.**
- Must include supporting evidence of expenditures (original receipts) with details. *All receipts etc., should be in English. If not in English, a translation must be provided for each item, line by line.* Note that summary credit card receipts do not constitute an original receipt (must include detailed credit card receipt).
- Any amounts left over must be returned to the University at the time of settlement. Reimbursement will be made to the employee if the business expense is more than the cash advanced, depending upon the amount.

Exceptions to the guidelines stated above require special approval. A memo detailing the exception must be approved and signed by a senior University official and submitted with the expense reimbursement request. This will provide the Office of Accounting and Administration with an audit trail for future internal and/or external audits.

In the event that an unsettled advance goes beyond 30 days and practical attempts have failed, the University may pursue other collections options. This may include reporting the amount to the IRS via W-2, along with the withholding of proper taxes.

B. Corporate/University Credit Cards

The University issues corporate credit cards to individuals based on a business need. These credit cards may only be used for business expenses. The corporate/University card is the responsibility of the individual cardholder, and it is the individual cardholder's responsibility to ensure that receipts are returned in a timely manner.

The same rules/restrictions for expense reimbursements for travel, meals, and business expenses outlined in this policy apply to corporate/University credit card usage. Please refer to the Business, Expenditure, and Travel Policy A-1 for more information.

It is at the discretion of the University to revoke or cancel a University card at any time under any circumstances.

C. Entertainment

Entertainment expenses include events such as theater or sporting events, whereby a business discussion takes place during, immediately before, or immediately after the event.

Entertainment records must include the date, location, type of entertainment, a description of the business reason and nature of the discussion, and the business relationship, names, and titles of those in attendance.

An original receipt must be submitted with the cash/check request for any meal or entertainment expense for cash payments. In addition to the original receipt, the following documentation is required by the IRS and must be recorded on the cash/check request:

- Names of individuals present, their titles, and company name if applicable
- Name and location of where the meal or event took place
- Exact amount and date of the expense
- Specific business reason or business topic discussed

All meal and entertainment expenses are subject to disallowance if certain criteria are not met. Therefore, it is critical that all business meals and entertainment expenses be properly documented.

E. Memberships

The University may pay for individual professional memberships to organizations that

do not offer institutional or corporate memberships if the employee's supervisor or the authorized signer for the employee's department approves membership.

A request for payment of a membership that does not clearly indicate an institutional membership must meet the following guidelines:

- The membership is clearly in the best interest of the University and directly relates to the job responsibility of the employee
- Institutional or corporate membership is not offered by the organization
- Publications (journals, newsletters, etc.) that are a benefit of membership should be available, whenever possible, for use by other employees in the unit.

F. Telephones

University Telephones

Personal long-distance calls from a Converse University telephone should be made using a personal calling card. In the event that an employee must use a University telephone without a personal calling card, his/her department must be reimbursed for the cost of that long distance call(s).

Cellular Phones

University provided cellular phones are intended for business use only, and the detailed bills that support that use must be available for review. Employees will be responsible for reimbursing the University for any additional charges the University must incur for personal usage related to text messaging, data usage and roaming, and long-distance charges.

G. Meals

Since every scenario and situation cannot be anticipated in advance, it is expected that this policy will be interpreted on a conservative basis and that each employee will exercise the same prudence as would be exercised if the employee were bearing the expense personally. All expenditures are subject to budget constraints.

Allowance for Meals

For domestic travel, the meal expense allowance is not to exceed \$35.00 per day per individual for three meals, including tips. For international travel, the meal expense allowance is not to exceed \$50.00 per day. Prescribed maximums are not to be treated collectively as per diem allowances, nor are they to be used individually without regard to the actual and necessary expenses. If actual expenses are less than the

prescribed maximum, reimbursement is allowed only for actual expenses; in the event of team or group travel, including travelers' names on appropriate receipts.

Certain cities and travel areas will be allowed reimbursements up to \$50.00 per day provided proper documentation and receipts are provided. These areas include but are not limited to:

- Atlanta
- Baltimore/DC Area
- New Orleans
- New York City
- Orlando
- Chicago

Other cities not included above require prior approval from the Office of Accounting and Business.

Alcoholic beverages and tobacco products are typically not reimbursable in ordinary business travel; however, under certain circumstances where the area's Vice President's approval is obtained prior to travel, limited reimbursements are permitted.

Within the office of Institutional Advancement and the President's Office, when the meal is with a current or prospective donor, the meal expenditure can be reimbursed in excess of the current standard rate with supervisor approval. In these circumstances, it is recommended that the daily per diem allowance should not exceed \$70 per person, including tips and alcohol.

Meals included in conference registrations, covered by other University payments, or paid by others, are not eligible for reimbursement to the traveler.

Meals that are reimbursed for an individual employee without an accompanying overnight stay are considered taxable income (IRS Publication 17, Chapter 26). As a result, employees cannot be reimbursed for meals without an overnight stay unless one of the following conditions is met:

- They are entertaining non-University employees (who must be identified on the receipt) for business purposes
- They are attending a conference in which the meal is not included in the cost of the conference
- The employee is in continuous travel status for 12 hours or more

- Athletic team travel will be also be included as an exception.

Tipping for Meals

Tips included on meal receipts will be reimbursed as part of the meal expense allowance. Excessive tips (greater than 20%) will not be reimbursed.

Settlement/Reimbursement

Reimbursements are to be submitted on a petty cash reimbursement request (up to \$75), an expense reimbursement form, or a check request form. Expenses must be accurately reconciled as soon as possible and no later than 30 days after the expense has been incurred. **Original** itemized receipts are required for all meals. Note that summary credit card receipts do not constitute an original itemized receipt. In order to prevent the loss of receipts, we request that all documentation be taped onto 8 ½ x 11 paper. *Reimbursement forms must list the names of the attendees, including students.* Undocumented or unexplained expenses will not be paid.

The requestor must obtain the budget officer's approval for all reimbursement requests and requests for vendor payments. Budget officer approvals require the budget officer's signature on properly prepared expense vouchers with clear signatures to comply with the necessary requirements. Improperly prepared or incomplete forms will be returned to the requestor. Budget Officers approving expense reimbursement requests are responsible for assuring compliance with the policy as well as determining what is appropriate and reasonable.

All reimbursement requests will also be reviewed by the Office of Finance and Business for compliance with the policy regardless of signatures. Requests which are not clearly within the policy or that are illegible will be returned to the requestor for discussion and follow-up. It is the burden of the employee submitting the request to ensure that the request can be read and its business purpose and attendees are clear.

Travelers must ensure that all reimbursement requests submitted for payment are approved and authorized. Approval of reimbursements submitted for payment requires that the approver:

- Be actively involved in the business purpose of the trip
- Has reviewed the reimbursement voucher and is satisfied that obligations were met

- Verifies that prices and terms are correct
- Accepts responsibility for the charge and any variances to budget

Expenses submitted for reimbursement should be turned in as soon as possible. No reimbursements will be considered if turned in more than 60 days after being paid or incurred (30 days at year-end).

Special Circumstances

There are certain circumstances where additional guidance applies. For these unusual items, seek prior approval.

H. Travel

The University will reimburse employees for reasonable and necessary expenses while away from home in the conduct of business based on IRS guidelines for an accountable plan. Away from home required that the employee is away for a period substantially longer than an ordinary workday and/or it is reasonable for the employee to spend the night.

Employees will not be reimbursed for entertainment expenses while traveling unless the expense is for a valid business purpose. Personal entertainment expenses not related to the entertainment of customers or donors are not reimbursable. Examples include sporting events, theater, in-room movies, snacks, etc.

Where feasible and appropriate, you should have the University pay pre-trip travel expenses before the trip. Eligible expenses you pay are reimbursable after the trip.

All receipts should be in English. If not in English, a translation must be provided for each line item.

Where feasible, when the University pays the cost of travel by third parties such as candidates and consultants, the department should work with the individuals in order to take advantage of University discounts and processes.

Spouse/Companion Travel

A spouse or other individual may accompany an employee on a business trip at the employee's expense; Converse University will only cover the employee's expense and not the spouse/companion's expense.

Travel Arrangements

Employees should make reservations (for flight and hotel accommodations) as early as possible to take advantage of advance purchase

discounts. Travelers should select modestly priced accommodations and avoid expensive, “downtown” hotels.

Lodging

All hotel reservations should be secured in advance when possible, using direct billing. The Office of Finance and Business will gladly assist in setting up an account for direct billing at hotels/motels that you frequent. If direct billing is not possible, the University’s corporate credit card or personal credit card should be used **prior to travel**. Cash advance funds are NOT allowed for hotels. The employee can report the expense on a travel reimbursement form for reimbursement.

Trips of less than 50 miles one way from the University, or the traveler’s residence, whichever is shorter, are considered local travel and do not qualify for an overnight stay unless Converse business requires attendance at an event away from Spartanburg, where attendance and travel for the event would prohibit the employee from having adequate time at his/her home to rest.

For seminars, meetings, or other group activities, reimbursement will be for no more than the published conference group rate at the host hotel.

It is the responsibility of the traveler to cancel any room reservation he/she will not be using. A record of the cancellation number should be kept in case of billing disputes.

If an employee fails to cancel a reservation in a timely fashion, he/she may be held responsible for any cancellation fees. A written explanation for any failure to cancel must be filed.

Room service, alcohol, in-room movies, snacks, and valet parking are NOT reimbursable. Reasonable cab fares will be reimbursed when no other forms of transportation are available.

Combining University Business Travel with Other Travel

The University will only reimburse the business portion of a trip when that trip is combined with personal vacation travel. Only receipts from the business portion of the trip must be submitted.

If the delineation between business ending and vacation beginning is unclear, expense reimbursement will be subject to the Office of

Finance and Business for review and approval. They will use IRS regulations and guidelines as a basis for determining reimbursement.

Standard Mileage

Mileage is reimbursable for business-related travel of 10 miles or greater one way. For mileage reimbursement, you must include the specific origination and destination and the purpose of the trip or trips. Note city names alone are not acceptable.

The University will reimburse employees and students for the approved use of their personal vehicles at a mileage rate predetermined by the University. This reimbursement rate is intended to cover the costs of gasoline, oil, repairs, insurance, and other expenses. Please use the Expense Reimbursement form for reimbursement.

Rental Cars

The University encourages efficient faculty/staff travel. Rental cars have proven to be an efficient method for faculty/staff travel and should be used as the guidelines below apply.

If the round-trip University-related travel is greater than 200 miles, arrangements to rent a vehicle are encouraged. Not only is it more cost-effective for the University, but it will save the employee from accumulating miles on his/her personal vehicle.

Personal Vehicles

When travel by private automobile is chosen over commercial transportation to save time, transport equipment, or reduce costs when a number of people are traveling together to the same destination, reimbursement to the driver is made on the basis of miles traveled. The mileage submitted for reimbursement must be documented. This per-mile reimbursement predetermined by the University is intended to cover the costs of gasoline, oil, repairs, insurance, and other expenses.

When travel by private automobile is for the convenience of the traveler, reimbursement is not to exceed the cost (or the sum of the costs for more than one traveler) of round-trip coach airfare, plus the reasonable costs of ground transportation, including a rental vehicle.

The mileage allowance covers all operating costs of the vehicle (including gas and insurance); therefore, no other vehicle expense reimbursements will be made.

Tolls and fees, such as parking charges, will be reimbursed if duly noted on the submitted form. Traffic and parking violations are not reimbursable.

Travel between a person's home and the University is considered a personal commuting expense and is not reimbursed.

Per IRS guidelines, an adjunct faculty member is considered to be an employee with no regular or main place of business. Transportation between residence and classroom (campus) is considered normal commuting and is non-reimbursable. If reimbursed, the reimbursed amount must be included in the employee's W-2 earnings and taxed. Therefore, the reimbursement will come through as part of the adjunct faculty member's payroll.

Telephone Usage

While traveling on University business, reasonable business phone calls will be reimbursed. In addition, reasonable calls made to one's primary residence will also be reimbursed. To minimize the additional charges added by hotels for room-telephone usage, a calling card or cell phone should be used whenever possible.

Settlement/Reimbursement

Reimbursements are to be submitted on a petty cash reimbursement request (up to \$75), an expense reimbursement form, or a check request form. **Original** itemized receipts are required for all travel expenses. *Reimbursement forms must list the names of the attendees, including students.*

In order to prevent the loss of receipts, we request that all documentation be taped onto 8 1/2 x 11 paper.

The requestor must obtain the budget officer's approval for all reimbursement requests and requests for vendor payments. Budget officer approvals require the budget officer's signature on properly prepared expense vouchers with clear signatures to comply with the necessary requirements. Improperly prepared or incomplete forms will be returned to the requestor. Budget Officers approving expense reimbursement requests are responsible for assuring compliance with the Meals policy as well as determining what is appropriate and reasonable.

Expenses submitted for reimbursement should be turned in as soon as possible. No reimbursements will be considered if turned in

more than 60 days after being paid or incurred (30 days at year-end). Please refer to the Business, Expenditure, and Travel Policy A-1 - Expenditures for more information.

1. Unallowable Expenses

Unless specifically addressed in this policy, no other expenses are reimbursable.

Unallowable expenses include but are not limited to the following:

- Expenses that do not support the University's missions of education, research, and public service
- Expenses that are extreme, excessive, and/or illegal
- Expenses that represent personal recognition of Converse University employees (Faculty and Staff), i.e., costs to recognize birthdays, childbirth or adoption, weddings, anniversaries, holidays, retirement, etc. are unallowable
- Gifts to students – workers, paid for with University funds
- Personal expenses that are neither business-related nor required in carrying out an individual's job responsibility.
- Home office costs that are not part of the official arrangement
- Food for a regular faculty/staff meeting
- Expenditures that are (or will be) reimbursed from another source
- Amusement, entertainment, or social activities that are not directly connected to Converse University functions and purposes (see policy on Entertainment)
- Attendance by certain categories of faculty and/or staff at a University-sponsored fundraising event helps to serve an "advancement" function at the event. The actual cost of the meal should be the only amount billed and reimbursed. That amount may be charged as a Converse University Expense. Any contribution made on top of that amount would be a personal choice contribution paid for by the individual faculty/staff member.
- Barbers/hairdressers
- Car washes
- Child/ElderCare
- Clothing
- Coffee purchases that are not a part of a business meeting or meal
- Credit Card Delinquency fees
- Health clubs/Fitness centers

- Individual association membership fees, dues or licenses that are not directly related to the individual's position or academic discipline
- In-flight telephone charges
- In-flight or in-house movies
- In-flight cash bar
- Medications
- Parking tickets
- Personal incidentals including snacks, magazines, newspapers
- Pet care
- Room Service and in-room snacks, including mini-bar
- Shoe shines/repairs
- Souvenirs/personal gifts
- Tobacco products
- Traffic violations
- Towing charges for unauthorized parking
- Valet parking/service (unless that is the only option, as is the case for some downtown hotels)

Version History

Sun, 08/13/2023 - 22:14

Converse University Key Control System

Policy Owner Campus Safety
Responsible Campus Safety, Human
Office(s) Resources

Purpose

The purpose of the key control system is to limit the number of keys issued for university facilities, maintain knowledge of personnel with possession of keys, and improve the safety and security of the campus community.

Policy

1. The Director of Campus Safety or Designee shall be responsible for implementing and maintaining a strict key control system.

- Requests for all exterior and interior door keys shall be made to Campus Safety.
- The Director of Campus Safety or Designee shall consult with Vice Presidents, Deans, and Directors regarding the issuance of interior and exterior door keys. This process will include a key request form.

• The key request form must include the signatures of the person the key is issued; the Vice President of the area in question; and the Dean, Director or Chair of the department. Upon completion of the form, the Director of Campus Safety or Designee may approve or deny the request.

• No approvals will be granted for requests made outside of the department area. • The Director of Campus Safety or designee shall be the only authority to have locks changed and new keys issued. **NOTE: There will be no charge for a broken key returned; however, if a key is lost, a fee will be charged to the responsible party to replace the key and the lock.**

• **Key requestors will be fined \$75 for a lost key, plus \$50 to change the lock and \$50 for each additional door the key operated.**

• Requests for door openings will be granted to key holders. After 1 request within a year timeframe, there will be a charge of \$25 per occurrence This applies to Faculty, Staff and Students.

2. The Director of Residence Life will be responsible for issuing and collecting residence hall room keys. This individual shall also file replacement key and lock requests with the Director of Campus Safety. **Students are assessed \$75 for lost keys. A total of \$150 if a door has to be re-cored. This process will also apply to the Director of Event Services.** Members of the university community (faculty, staff, and contractual employees) will be required to sign for any key issued to them. Keys will only be issued for their specific area.

3. All exterior doors will be secured and opened by Campus Safety officers at designated times.

4. During non-business hours, university faculty and staff not issued keys must notify Campus Safety when they need to enter a secured facility. For faculty and staff that have been issued keys to their respective areas, they too must notify Campus Safety that they are in a building and make a second call when they leave. **NOTE: Personnel entering a secured facility after hours will be responsible for re-locking the door.**

5. Only Campus Safety, Director of Residence Life, and certain Facilities Department administrators may possess exterior door keys. Student workers, graduate assistants, and part-time employees will not be issued keys to any

exterior doors unless approved by Campus Safety Director or Designee. A valid reason MUST be given on the request form

6. Faculty and staff must return all Converse keys to Campus Safety or HR prior to resignation or termination of employment. **A fee will be assessed for any keys not returned.** 7. In the event the key holder moves offices and/or buildings, all keys must be returned to Campus Safety or the locksmith prior to new keys being issued.

Related Resources

https://my.converse.edu/ICS/icsfs/mm/key_request_policy_and_form.pdf?target=51d...

Version History

Wed, 08/28/2024 - 14:14
TLC

COVID Policy Statement

Policy Owner Human Resourcees

Version History

Sun, 08/13/2023 - 21:11

Credit Card Policy

Policy Statement

Converse University provides a Corporate Credit Card with no annual fee to certain employees whose job responsibilities require them to travel extensively. The Corporate Card provides employees with a convenient method of payment for business expenses. This policy is intended to inform employees when to use the credit card and what benefits and services the card provides. Please refer to the Business, Expenditure, and Travel Policy A1 for more information.

Procedures

Employees who are eligible to receive a credit card are required to read this credit card policy and attend a training session. They are also required to sign the last page of this policy, indicating their understanding of Converse University with respect to the use of the card.

The credit card can only be used by the named cardholder and is not to be used by another employee. In most instances, the credit card is to be used for travel and entertainment expenses only. Please refer to the travel and entertainment

section of the employee handbook for further details. Business travel or business entertainment includes, but is not limited to:

- Hotels/motels
- Meals
- Automobile fuel and rentals
- Air, cab, or transportation fare
- Conference registrations
- Parking fees

Under no circumstances should the card be used for charging personal transactions. The credit limits may vary by employee depending on the employee's position at the University. The maximum credit limit should be kept confidential and not shared with other employees.

Expenses charged to the credit card must be reconciled weekly online through Capital Bank. Employees should retain a copy of all documentation for their files. In the event of missing receipts, the cardholder is to complete a Missing Receipt Form, have the supervisor sign the form, and include it with the other documents. Loss of receipts may result in disciplinary action and/or card privileges may be discontinued.

The employee's supervisor will be required to verify all transactions with each expense online. The supervisor will ensure the transactions are business-related and the employee has supplied all required supporting documentation. The supervisor will approve the transactions online.

Audits:

All credit card documents are subject to audits by the Business Office, external auditors, and the IRS to ensure that transactions follow and adhere to federal guidelines, intended use, and University policies and procedures.

Disputed Charges

Disputed charges are the cardholder's responsibility. The cardholder may also seek the assistance of the Office of Accounting and Administration when dealing with disputed charges. The Cardholder must contact the vendor directly and Capital Bank at 1-877- 844-8790. The Cardholder is expected to resolve discrepancies directly within 60 days of the error/transaction occurrence. Failure to do so may prevent the University from reversing the charges on the account.

Misuse or Abuse of the Credit Card

The term “misuse or abuse” means the use of the credit card outside the employee’s authorized parameters (e.g., charges in excess of the permitted limit; purchases of items of a type other than those allowed). If misuse of the card is determined at any time, the supervisor of the cardholder will be contacted, and in conjunction with the Controller, will determine if the card privileges will be discontinued. The Vice President of Finance will also be notified, who may also recommend the card privileges be discontinued. The cardholder may be personally responsible for reimbursing the University for all unauthorized purchases. This action may also result in disciplinary action.

Lost/Stolen/Fraudulent Use of Cards

If the card is lost or stolen, or if you detect a fraudulent transaction, report it immediately.

- Contact the bank at 1-877-844-8790
- Contact the Controller’s Office at 864-596-9028
- Report the transaction in question. Have the transaction number and basic information ready.
- Inform your supervisor.

Surrendering Your Card Upon Terminating Employment

The Corporate Card is the property of the University. When you terminate your employment with the University, you must return your Corporate Card.

- Return the card to the Human Resources Department. This action must occur before you receive your final paycheck.
- The Human Resources Department will notify the Business Office that you are no longer employed by the University and will forward your card to that department.

Individuals given credit cards are held accountable for all transactions related to their cards. In the event of a cardholder’s credit card reconciliation with statements not consistently being forwarded in a timely manner, suspensions or revocation of the card may occur.

Non-compliance with the Credit Card Policy or fraudulent use of the credit card may result in disciplinary action up to and the possibility of discharge.

Expenditure Policy

Policy Owner Office of Finance and Business

Scope

This policy applies to all employees of Converse University in regard to any expenses to be incurred on behalf of the University or for which the employee expects or wishes to be reimbursed by the University. It is the responsibility of each individual employee to comply with this Expenditure Policy.

Policy

- **Expenditure and Supply Purchases**

All purchases on behalf of Converse for supplies, materials, equipment, services, or other effects that cost in excess of \$200.00 must be preapproved by the appropriate Converse University budget officer.

Furthermore, any purchase that will be made by an employee or University contractor for which the employee or contractor expects to be reimbursed by the University requires preapproval. This includes purchases for travel, conferences, meals, or other events.

- Any employee or contractor making a purchase without following these guidelines will have made an unauthorized purchase and will be subject to discipline up to and including termination.
- If any employee or University contractor fails to request and receive proper preapproval as set forth above, the employee must submit an explanation to his/her Vice President and level supervisor. If that supervisor approves the request, it will be submitted to the Vice President for Finance & Administration or the President for final approval. Payment for unauthorized purchases may become the responsibility of the person(s) that made the actual purchase, if not preapproved or subsequently ratified. To initiate a purchase, a requisition form signed by a division dean or supervisor is necessary.
- The employee initiating the requisition must furnish the following information on the requisition: an item needed, number needed, brand names, model numbers, catalog numbers, account number, and any specifications applicable such as color, size, price, vendor, and complete vendor address. The department manager’s signature certifies that the item(s) is (are) needed and that the department has adequate funds to cover the expense in the budget. The

requisition is forwarded to the manager's divisional Vice President or his/her designee for approval. The completed, a signed requisition is sent to the Business Office Procurement Processing, where based on the total value of the requisition, it is distributed to the appropriate person for approval. Requisitions are reviewed and approved by the CFO or designee.

Version History

Sun, 08/13/2023 - 22:17

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

Policy Owner Registrar

Responsible Office(s) Registrar, Human Resources, Provost

Policy

Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act

1. What is the federal law regarding student records?

The "Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act" (also referred to as FERPA and the Buckley amendment) was passed by Congress in 1974.

FERPA and its regulations outline the following:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records that the institution is keeping on the student.
2. The right to seek amendment to those records and in certain cases to append a statement to the record.
3. The right to limit disclosure of the student's record.
4. The right to file a complaint with the FERPA Office when an educational institution violates the Act or regulations.

2. What is an Educational record?

Almost any information directly related to a student and maintained by Converse College or by a person acting for the College, is considered a student educational record. Any record related directly to a student should be held in confidence.

Examples of educational records include:
Transcripts/grades

- Student Schedules
- Names of students' advisers Papers/tests
- Disciplinary records of students
- Personal information such as social security number, age, parent's name

The storage media in which you find this information does not matter. Student educational records may be:

- A document in the Registrar's Office A computer printout
- A class list on a desktop
- A computer display screen
- Notes taken during an advisement session

To avoid violations of FERPA rules, DO NOT:

- Use the Social Security number of a student in a public posting of grades or link the name of a student with that student's social security number in any public manner;
- Leave confidential information unsecured in your office or work area (for example, on your desktop) when your office or work area is not secured;
- Leave graded tests in a stack for students to pick up by sorting through the papers of all students;
- Circulate a printed class list with student name and social security number or grades as an attendance roster;
- Discuss the progress of any student with anyone other than the student (including parents) without the consent of the student or verifying that the student has granted access to the third party by contacting the Registrar's Office;
- Provide anyone outside the College with a list of students enrolled in classes;
- Provide anyone with student schedules or assist anyone other than College employees in finding a student on campus.

If you have a question or are uncertain what action to take, contact the Office of the Registrar (864-596-9095, or registrar@converse.edu)

Version History

Sun, 08/13/2023 - 21:35

Grievance Procedures

Policy

The following procedures provide equitable and prompt response to employee grievances respecting such matters as salary, work assignments, promotion, tenure, conditions of employment, termination, unfair discrimination on the basis of sex, and sexual harassment. The procedures are in compliance with the regulations of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. These procedures are also available to employees grieving promotion, conditions of employment, termination, or discrimination not based on sex or sexual harassment. Employees who have not yet completed the 90-day introductory/probationary period of employment are not eligible to participate in the Grievance Procedure outlined in this policy.

Every effort will be made to achieve an informal settlement of a grievance through consultation at whatever administrative level is appropriate. An employee who has a work-related problem or question is strongly encouraged to bring it to the attention of the immediate supervisor before contacting the supervisor's manager. If the grievance cannot be resolved informally, the following steps will be taken for Converse employees:

1. The employee with a grievance ("Grievant") will present the complaint in writing to the administrative supervisor at the level of the Dean, Vice President, or Senior Vice President within 14 days of the alleged action that is the basis of the grievance. At the time of the complaint, a copy of the grievance must be presented to the Director of Human Resources. Upon receipt of a copy of the grievance complaint, the Director of Human Resources will issue a copy of the Grievance Committee Guidelines to the concerned parties. If the grievance is against the Dean, Vice President, Senior Vice President, or President, the Grievant may present his or her complaint to a Vice President not directly in the line of supervision. The signed, written complaint must sufficiently state the nature and the facts of the alleged incident and must contain the names of all relevant witnesses.
2. The administrator receiving the written complaint will be responsible for establishing a Grievance Committee, to be composed as follows:

- a. First Member - The Grievant selects the first member (peer level);
 - b. Second Member - The Dean (or administrative supervisor) appoints the second member;
 - c. Chair of Grievance Committee:
 - i. For Administration/Staff: The Vice President for Finance and Business (who is in charge of compliance with Federal regulations), if not subject of the complaint, or the President appoints the third, who will be Chair; or
 - ii. For Faculty: The President of the Faculty Senate (if not subject of the complaint) or President appoints the third, who will be Chair.
3. The Grievant and other parties concerned in the grievance can bring witnesses and freely offer evidence to the Committee. The Grievant, Accused, and witnesses must present their written statements to the minute-taker before offering their testimony. A representative of the Human Resources Office will take written minutes of the hearings and make these available to the Grievant and the Accused. No minutes will be taken during the "closed sessions" deliberations by the Committee as it considers the evidence that has been presented.
 4. When the Committee has completed its deliberations, it will report its findings to the President of the University unless the President is subject of the complaint, if so, then to the Chair of the Board of Trustees, who will take final action on the Committee's report. The President of the University or the President's designee will have the final authority to decide all grievances.
 5. Time Limits
 - a. The Grievance Committee must be constituted within 15 working days after the submission of a written complaint.
 - b. The Grievance Committee must meet and deliver its written report as described within one month after receiving the case.
 - c. The President of the University or the President's designee will take action on the Grievance Committee's report within 15 working days after receiving it.
 6. Appeal
If either the Grievant or the Accused has questions regarding the findings of the Committee or the President's decision, that person may meet with the President to

discuss his or her concerns (or with the Chair of the Board of Trustees, if the President is involved in the grievance).

7. Confidentiality

The right to the confidentiality of all members of the academic community will be respected in both informal and formal procedures. The University prohibits any kind of retaliation against any person who, in good faith, brings a complaint to the attention of the University. All complaints will be kept confidential to the fullest extent possible.

Version History

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Grievance Committee Guidelines

Policy Owner Human Resources, Provost

Responsible Office(s) Human Resources, Provost

Policy

1. Findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the Committee must be based on a preponderance of the evidence presented and shall be the result of a majority vote of the Committee.
2. In reference to a grievance brought forth which alleges sexual harassment, the Committee will look at the record of the case as a whole and at the totality of the circumstance, such as the nature of the sexual advance and the context in which the alleged incidents occurred. Such determinations shall be made from the facts on a case-by-case basis.
3. If, in a particular instance, a committee member feels that he or she cannot render an objective decision due to personal relationships with any of the parties involved or if a particular committee member is an involved party, said Committee member must withdraw from the Committee for that particular hearing. In such an event, the President shall appoint an appropriate ad hoc member to the Committee for hearing the particular complaint.

4. Any Committee member who cannot attend a particular hearing, for whatever reason, must be replaced for that hearing by an ad hoc member appointed by the President.
5. Upon receipt of a written complaint, the Committee shall, after a reasonable notice, hold a hearing at which the testimony of both the Complainant and the Accused shall be heard. Both parties shall have the right to be accompanied by an advisor of their choice from within the University community. The Committee may also hear testimony from other parties who may have relevant information regarding the case, but only after notifying the Accused and the Complainant. Only written minutes of the hearing will be taken.
6. After hearing all of the evidence, the Committee shall deliver to the President of the University its written findings of the facts and shall recommend a sanction to the President.
7. Determination of Sanctions: The President of the University shall, in consultation with the Committee, determine the sanctions to be imposed on the Accused, if any. In so determining, the President shall accept the findings of fact made by the Committee; however, recommendations as to the imposition of sanctions by the Committee shall not be binding upon the President. The President will inform the chairman of the Grievance Committee in writing of the final decision regarding the case. The chairman of the Grievance Committee will, in turn, inform the Accused and the Complainant in writing of the Committee's findings and the President's decision.
8. Appeal
9. If either the Complainant or the Accused has questions regarding the findings of the Committee or the President's decision, that person may meet with the President to discuss his or her concerns.
10. If the Accused or Complainant is not satisfied with the findings of the Committee and the decision of the President, she or he may appeal to the President of the University for reconsideration. The President has the option to establish a new committee for further review of the findings. An appeal decision will be reached by the President within 10 working days.
11. Hearing Formats
Individuals thought to have relevant

information or testimony, including an accused employee, will be contacted and interviewed by appropriate University officials. If sufficient information is available to conclude that there are “reasonable grounds” to do so, the University will conduct a hearing following one of two possible formats:

*a pre-hearing adjudication in which the charged employee accepts responsibility for the charge(s) and requests to have sanctions determined by the hearing authority without a formal hearing, or

*a hearing before the Grievance Committee, as established under “Grievance Procedures” guidelines in the *Administrative and Staff Handbook* and in the *Faculty Handbook*, to conduct hearings to determine responsibility and recommend appropriate sanctions.

12. Hearing Procedures

Decisions regarding responsibility for charges shall be based upon a “preponderance of evidence” standard, meaning responsibility does not have to be proven beyond a reasonable doubt. The University need only conclude that the conduct with which the employee is charged is more likely than not to have occurred. Regardless of the format chosen, hearing officers will not be restricted by technical rules of evidence. In these informal, non-adversarial hearings, there is no formal cross-examination. Reasonable accommodations may be made in hearing procedures, e.g., indirect questioning or special seating arrangements in the hearing room.

13. Sanctions

Possible sanctions recommended to the President or the President’s designee include loss of job, suspension, disciplinary probation, restitution, an official warning, or any combination of these. Conditions, restrictions, or specific prohibitions may be issued with or attached to any of these sanctions. The outcome of the hearing shall be reported in the employee’s personnel record maintained in the Human Resources Office.

14. Rights of the Accused Employee

15. I. To an explanation of the charges

- To an explanation of the campus judiciary process
- To state a preference as to campus hearing format
- To be presumed innocent
- To have a fair, impartial, speedy hearing
- To have someone accompany him/her through the hearing. All participants will be bound by the rules of confidentiality governing the hearing.
- To remain present for the entire proceedings and to inspect evidence presented, assuming the accused employee maintains appropriate decorum during the proceedings.
- To know ahead of time the names of witnesses to be called to the hearing
- To remain silent
- To testify on his/her own behalf
- To be free from a second hearing on the same charge after the employee’s actions have been found not in violation, exclusive of the President’s option to have the findings reviewed
- To appeal the decision of the hearing board

Version History

Sun, 08/13/2023 - 21:40

Non-Profit Organizations’ Events at Converse University Policy

Policy

All outside groups must reserve campus facilities through the Director of Events Services. External organizations are not permitted to fundraise on campus. Student organizations may plan and implement fundraising activities that benefit external organizations as a part of their service to the community. Such activities may be held on campus, provided they are initiated by a Converse student organization. External organizations wishing to post or distribute publicity materials must receive approval through Campus Life. All materials must be stamped for approval before distribution/posting. It is allowable for fundraising information to be included in materials as long as that information is for a secondary purpose, such as a season events series with donation information included.

Version History

Sun, 08/13/2023 - 21:18

Parking and Transportation

Policy Owner Campus Safety

Responsible Campus Safety, Human

Office(s) Resources

Policy Statement

The purpose of this policy is to outline the rules and regulations for use of motor vehicles including bicycles and mopeds on Converse's main campus. These rules and regulations are designed to ensure a fair and enforceable system on access to parking, to maintain orderly and safe traffic flow, and to protect and maintain the university's campus.

Converse is a private university; therefore, all parking lots and other areas are private property. Both the operation and parking of vehicles, bicycles and mopeds is a privilege and Converse reserves the right to regulate the use of spaces for the welfare and safety of our campus.

Cooperation and compliance with these rules and regulations by all members of this community are essential. Failure to comply may result in citations, fines, towing of vehicles at the owners' expense, and even suspension or revocation of parking privileges on campus.

Purpose

To establish policies, procedures, and guidelines for all Converse community parking and transportation on main campus.

Scope

This policy applies to all Converse students, faculty, staff, contractors, and any other person who conducts business on Converse's behalf, and visitors to Converse's main campus.

Policy

This policy applies to all Converse students, faculty, staff, contractors, and any other person who conducts business on Converse's behalf, and visitors to Converse's main campus.

1. Parking Permits

Students and employees utilizing any Converse parking area must register their vehicles and secure a parking permit. Parking permits are not transferable to another person or vehicle.

Parking is controlled through permits and designated parking areas for students, faculty and staff, and visitors. Permits do not guarantee a parking space but provide the driver with the license to park in any vacant and properly designated parking space.

A. Student Permits

Residential and commuter students must renew their parking permit each academic year through Campus Safety. Registration must be completed within five (5) days of operating the vehicle on campus.

Student stickers, both initial and renewals, are issued at the Campus Safety office and are included in tuition

Resident Students are allowed to only register one car at any time but may update or change their registration information with Campus Safety as needed.

B. Faculty/Staff Permits

Faculty and staff hang tags are issued at the time of employment and remain valid throughout employment. Hang tags are issued at no cost to the employee. Hang Tags must be displayed at all times in the front window, preferably hanging from the rearview mirror.

C. Visitor Passes

Visitors are expected to abide by Converse parking rules and should display a visitor parking pass when parking on Converse's campus. A complimentary, temporary visitor parking pass should be displayed on the front windshield and can be obtained from the host department or from Campus Safety during regular business hours. Visitor passes must be dated to be valid and are restricted to the designated areas on campus. Parking Fines may still apply if the visitor is found to be in violation of any posted or restricted parking areas and for other violations,

including but not limited to moving violations; blocking loading zones, fire lanes, or hydrants; parking in spaces designated for faculty, staff, or students without prior permission, and for other violation listed in Section IV of this policy. Event Visitor Parking is in the Fairview lot located across N. Fairview Ave

D. Bicycle, Moped Permits

All bicycles and mopeds must be registered and display a current Converse permit sticker. Permits are issued by Campus Safety after completion of the vehicle registration form on the Campus Safety site. Registration must be completed within five (5) days of operating the bicycle/moped on campus.

Any bicycle or moped without a current permit properly displayed is considered unregistered and subject to receiving the appropriate violation or confiscation. Properly displayed permits are located on the handlebar head tube. Campus Safety staff can assist in placing permits.

All bicycles and mopeds must be operated according to this policy.

Upon completion of the registration, a permit sticker can be picked up at the Campus Safety office.

Registration must be completed within five (5) days of operating the vehicle on campus to avoid confiscation.

2. Parking Regulations

All parking regulations are in force 24 hours a day, 7 days a week unless otherwise noted.

A. Designated Parking Spaces

Converse has designated parking spaces on campus. A list of color-coded line designations can be found on our public website. This site also includes maps of our Spartanburg campus parking areas.

B. Restricted Areas

Vehicles, bicycles and mopeds parking in any unauthorized area are considered in violation of this policy and therefore may be subject to fines and potential towing or immobilization. For bicycles and mopeds, parking in unauthorized areas may lead to confiscation.

Towing is strictly enforced.

Restricted areas include:

1. Fire Lanes

Pursuant to the South Carolina Code §56-5-2, vehicles may not be left in any fire lanes on campus. If the vehicle is left unattended for 15 minutes or longer, Campus Safety has the right to tow the vehicle at the owner's expense. This does not apply to emergency vehicles, emergency repair contractor vehicles, official vehicles responding to calls or incidents, or carriers delivering mail, parcels, or packages. **EMERGENCY FLASHERS ARE NOT PERMISSION TO BE IN A FIRE LANE**

Pursuant to South Carolina law, only the Director of Campus Safety and/or the Campus Fire Marshal may give permission to park in the fire lanes for very limited times only. **No one else on campus has this authority.**

2. Other Prohibited Spaces

Except when necessary to avoid conflict with other traffic, or in compliance with the directions of a Campus Safety Officer, no person shall stop, stand or park a vehicle:

- Creating an obstruction of a sidewalk or any other roadway.
- On a crosswalk.
- On lawns or other cultivated areas.
- Within an intersection;
- Within fifteen (15) feet of a fire hydrant; or
- At any place where an official traffic control device prohibits standing, parking, or stopping.

3. Towing Zones

Certain areas on campus are towing zones. Vehicles parked in these areas will be towed at the owner's expense in cases where they are abandoned, disrupt the normal traffic flow, damage property or landscaping, create a hazard, or are parked in reserved spaces.

3. Enforcement

Campus Safety is responsible for issuing citations, enforcement, and reporting of parking violations to college administration as appropriate.

Vehicles, bicycles and mopeds may be issued a fine without warning due to a breach of this policy. Repeat offenses or other circumstances, such as blocking fire lanes and emergency access, may result in towing at the driver's expense.

Cooperation and compliance with these rules and regulations by all members of this community are essential. Failure to comply may result in citations, fines, towing of vehicles at owner's expense, suspension or revocation of parking privileges on campus, and even disciplinary action. Students, Staff and Faculty are responsible for their guests parking violations if left unsettled.

4. Parking Fines

Failure to comply with this policy or any parking regulations will result in fines. Converse reserves the right to review and update parking fees at any time.

Parking Violations:

Parking Permit - None or Expired	\$50
Over posted time	\$50
Improper parking	\$50
Parking without a valid permit	\$50
Reserved Space	\$50
Blocking Sidewalk	\$50
Blocking Traffic	\$50

Parking in any of the following locations:

On lawn or sidewalk	\$50
Loading area	\$50

No Parking Zone

Wrong way \$50

Reserved for Handicap \$50

Fire Lane/Hydrant \$100

Other \$100

Moving Violations: \$100-\$200

Failure to Stop at Stop Sign \$60

Failure to Yield \$60

Driving Against Traffic on One-Way Road \$60

Failure to Obey the Lawful Direction of a Campus Safety Officer \$60

Failure to Report an Accident \$60

Careless Operation \$100

All fines must be paid with Student Billing Services and are due within ten (10) days. Any fine not paid or appealed within ten (10) days of issuance, with the exception of weekends and holidays, will be doubled in value.

For students, all fines due must be paid in full before next semester's registration or graduation.

For faculty and staff, Converse reserves the right to clear all remaining unpaid parking fines by deduction from wages, annually and/or upon separation of employment.

Outstanding fines under this policy that are not paid in full prior to June 30th each year are subject to payroll deduction from the first paycheck in the new fiscal year (July payment) or from the last payment in the event of separation of employment. Notification of deduction will be made at least seven (7) days in advance of the deduction, to the extent possible.

Payment of fines may be made in the Billing Office by

- Student Account
- Credit/Debit Card (Visa/Mastercard/American Express)
- Check

City of Spartanburg authorities and Converse Campus Safety may issue tickets and/or tow a vehicle at the owner's expense for fire lane, visitor space, and "disabled-accessible" violations. Three or more consecutive violations of any kind may result in towing or booting of the vehicle at the expense of the violator/owner. Fines will automatically be charged to the violator/owner account.

Converse is not responsible for any damage to vehicles caused by the towing of vehicles.

5. Revocation of Parking Permissions

Converse retains the right to revoke any on-campus parking and driving privileges within its sole discretion. Revocation reasons include, but are not limited to:

- Violations in excess of five per semester or seven per year;
- Use of a permit in a fraudulent manner;

- Creating a nuisance or causing property damage while making repairs to vehicles on campus;
- Causing property damage;
- Becoming verbally or physically abusive, threatening or verbally assaulting any safety officer during the performance of his or her duties, or
- Inappropriate operation of a motor vehicle, bicycle, or moped that presents a safety concern to the campus community.

Payment of violations does not void a revocation.

6. Appeals

Appeals of parking citations, towing charges, and revocations may be made within ten (10) days from the date of issuance or notification by contacting the Director of Campus Safety to set up an appeal hearing. At this point, the citation will be put on hold until the hearing has concluded and a final determination has been made. The Director of Campus Safety may consult with other university officials in the determination process and will be responsible for communicating decisions with the appropriate parties.

Violations for which there are no appeals include:

- Parking in fire lanes or impeding a fire hydrant; and
- Unauthorized use of “disabled-accessible” parking spaces.

7. Motorcycles, Mopeds, Licensed Scooters, Bicycles, and Skateboards

All motorcycles and licensed scooters are subject to the same vehicle registration and parking regulations as any other motor vehicle. They are to be parked only in designated parking spaces and are not to be parked inside or adjacent to any buildings, on sidewalks, or within landscaped areas. Mopeds may be parked in any bike rack on campus, provided that the rack is not under a structure or cover.

Mopeds and bicycles may not be operated on sidewalks but may be walked to a campus bike rack and properly secured. All bicycles and mopeds must be parked in an outside bicycle rack and secured with a cable and lock; there are NO inside bicycle racks.

Motorcycles, mopeds, licensed scooters, bicycles, in-line skates, skateboards and other wheeled or

similar transportation should not be used in a manner that jeopardizes the safety of other pedestrians or in a manner that could damage campus property. This includes not operating these items on any walls, monuments, gutters, railings, racks, benches, other structures, or fixtures on the Campus; this includes on any ramps or steps on Campus except for the purpose of entering or leaving a building or making normal pedestrian progress along a Campus sidewalk.

None of these devices are permitted in any building.

8. Abandoned and Hazardous Vehicles

Parked vehicles without a current Converse issued parking permit will be deemed abandoned after 24 hours if it is observed unoccupied and abandoned. Campus Safety will work with the Spartanburg Police Department to confirm that the vehicle has not been stolen and is not wanted by local authorities. A warning sticker will be placed on the windshield advising the owner to remove the vehicle within 24 hours. If the vehicle remains parked after the expiration of that notification, Converse has the right to tow the vehicle at the owner’s expense.

Vehicles that appear to be vandalized or damaged and/or present a hazardous condition may be immediately towed. Hazards include but are not limited to, 1 or more flat tires for multiple days, impaired vehicles, vehicles parked in a hazardous location or in a hazardous manner.

Release of vehicles after towing is strictly between the towing company and the owner.

9. Scooters/ Mopeds/Other Battery-Operated Devices

Converse University is committed to maintaining a safe and accessible campus environment. To minimize risks associated with the operation, storage, and charging of mopeds, scooters, and other battery-powered devices, the following regulations are in effect:

a. Prohibited Devices:

The following devices are prohibited on all university property:

- Electric scooters (e-scooters)
- Hoverboards
- Electric bicycles (e-bikes)

- Any other battery-powered personal transportation devices not explicitly approved by the university

b. Use and Operation:

The operation of scooters, and other battery-powered devices is not permitted on campus walkways, sidewalks, roads, parking lots, or within any campus buildings.

These devices are not allowed to be ridden, stored, or parked on any university property.

c. Storage and Charging:

Storage of mopeds, scooters, or any other battery-powered devices within residence halls, academic buildings, or any other university facilities is strictly prohibited.

Charging these devices inside any university buildings, including residence halls, is not allowed due to potential fire hazards and safety concerns.

d. Exceptions:

Exceptions to this policy may be granted on a case-by-case basis for students or employees with documented mobility disabilities requiring the use of specific battery-powered devices. Such exceptions must be approved by the Office of Accessibility Services or Human Resources.

University-owned or operated electric vehicles used for campus maintenance or security are exempt from this policy.

e. Enforcement and Penalties:

Any violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action, which may include fines, confiscation of the device, and/or other penalties in accordance with university regulations.

Confiscated devices will become property of the University and will not be returned.

f. Reporting and Contact Information:

Violations of this policy should be reported using the Student Conduct reporting form located on My.Converse.edu. or to the Campus Fire Marshal

For questions or to request an exception, please contact the Office of Accessibility Services at accessibilityservices@converse.edu.

g. Electric Motor Vehicles

Personal electric vehicles are allowed to be on campus but are NOT allowed to be charged on campus.

A violation could result in confiscation of the charger, cutting off a plug, parking revocation, and/or other penalties in accordance with university regulations.

Related Resources

<https://www.converse.edu/life-at-converse/campus-services/parking-and-vehicle-i...>
https://my.converse.edu/ICS/Offices/Campus_Safety/Home.jnz?portlet=EX_FormFlow_...
https://my.converse.edu/ICS/Offices/Campus_Safety/

Version History

Tue, 08/13/2024 - 21:43
TLC

Relocation Policy

Policy Owner Human Resources, Provost

Responsible Office(s) Human Resources, Provost

Purpose

This policy outlines Converse University's relocation assistance offered to eligible new faculty and exempt leadership staff members who are required to move from another geographic location to accept a full-time position at the University. The goal is to support a smooth transition while ensuring consistency and fiscal responsibility.

Scope

Relocation assistance is available to:

- Full-time faculty and Exempt Senior Leadership Staff (i.e., Head Athletic Coaches) who are hired into permanent positions.
- Employees whose primary residence is more than 50 miles from Converse University at the time of hire.
- Individuals are offered relocation support as part of their formal offer of employment, after pre-approval from the Provost (Faculty), Director of Human Resources/VP of Finance (Exempt Administration and Staff). Failure to acquire pre-approval could result in the denial or revocation of the

request.

Note: Relocation support is discretionary and must be included in the official offer letter.

Policy

Moving expenses are limited to transporting the faculty or staff member and their immediate family to the new residence, as well as moving ordinary and customary household goods and personal effects. The moving expense authorization and the amount must be specified in the employment offer.

Reimbursement will be processed on actual amounts, up to the specified amount. Supporting documentation, including original, itemized receipts and a completed, signed Relocation Expense Reimbursement Form, must be submitted to the Human Resources/Provost office for processing. Documentation of eligible relocation expenses must be submitted within 60 days of the relocation date.

For 2018 through 2025, employers **must include moving expense reimbursements in employees' wages**. The new tax law suspends the exclusion for qualified moving expense reimbursements. Items that qualify for reimbursement and are not included in the employee's taxable income are:

1. Transportation of household goods and personal effects:
 - Cost of an insured moving company
 - Cost of truck rental in a self-move situation
 - Mileage or gas (at the prevailing federal standard mileage rate for moving expenses)
 - Packing supplies and furniture pad rental
 - Parking fees and tolls while in transit
 - Car shipping cost
 - Storage charges incurred in transit and for foreign moves
2. Travel to the new household:
 - Lodging while in transit (one night at the old location & one night upon arrival at the new location)
 - Mileage or gas (at the prevailing federal standard mileage rate for moving expenses)
 - Parking fees and tolls while in transit
3. Expenses that do not qualify as moving expenses and will not be reimbursed include:
 - Real Estate expenses associated with buying/selling a house (including but

- not limited to: remodeling/home improvements, closing costs, mortgage fees, points, or real estate taxes)
- Automobile registration costs, tags, or a driver's license
- General repairs, maintenance, insurance, or depreciation for your car
- Security deposits on an apartment or utilities
- Meal expenses incurred during relocation
- Moving boats, recreational vehicles, or antique cars
- Kenneling of domestic pets
- Storage for an extended period of time after the move
- Any expenses for which you take a business deduction
- Additional expenses for pre-move house-hunting expenses, sightseeing, or the extra expense of taking a circuitous, scenic route
- Expenses of entering into or breaking a lease
- Losses from disposing of memberships in clubs

Note: All expenses must be reasonable, necessary, and in compliance with IRS regulations.

Repayment Clause

If the employee voluntarily resigns or is terminated for cause within twelve (12) months of their start date, they may be required to repay a prorated portion of the relocation expenses received. Specifically, one-half (50%) of the total relocation assistance shall be repaid to Converse University if the faculty or staff member, for reasons within their control, leaves the University before completing one full year of employment. Any exceptions to this repayment requirement must be pre-approved in writing by the Vice President for Chief Financial Officer.

Exceptions

Any exceptions to this policy must be approved by the Provost and Chief Financial Officer, in consultation with the Human Resources department.

Definitions and Acronyms

Senior Leadership: Members, Exempt Staff representing of TLC, ELT, and Head Coaches

Version History

Sun, 08/13/2023 - 22:18

Clarification on eligibility, purpose, and scope.

Reporting Changes in Personal Information

All employees are expected to immediately report any changes in the following personal information to the Human Resources Department or update in the Human Resource Information System (HRIS) iSolved: name or beneficiary designation, home address, or phone information tax withholding allowances, and emergency contact information.

Reporting Improper Conduct

Policy

Converse University is committed to operating business in an ethical, honest, and lawful manner and providing a safe and productive environment for faculty, staff, students, alumni, and guests. The University expects its administrators, faculty, and staff to conduct their activities in accordance with University policies and applicable law.

If any Converse employee has reason to believe or reasonably suspects that the University or any of its agents is acting contrary to any applicable federal, state, or local laws or regulations, or contrary to any established University policy, he or she should feel welcome and encouraged to report such action or activity without fear of reprisal or retaliation. It is in the best interest of the University and the whole University community for this information to be brought forward immediately and dealt with promptly. The University will take whatever action is necessary and appropriate to address a violation of this policy.

No University employee may interfere with the good faith reporting of suspected or actual wrongful conduct; no individual who makes such a good faith report shall be subject to retaliation, including harassment or any adverse employment action, academic or educational consequence, as a result of making a report. Retaliation against anyone bringing forward a report of suspected illegal or improper activity will not be tolerated and is, itself, against the law. Should retaliation actually occur, such an act shall be considered a serious violation of University policy and will be dealt with accordingly. Encouraging others to retaliate is also a violation of this policy.

At the same time, employees must exercise sound judgment to avoid baseless allegations. Any individual who intentionally files fraudulent or bad faith complaints pursuant to this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment and/or legal action.

Reporting Procedure

An employee should first discuss his or her concern with his or her immediate supervisor to allow the University to investigate and, if applicable, correct the situation or condition creating the concern. Initial inquiries will be made to determine whether an investigation is appropriate and the form that it should take. Some concerns may be resolved without the need for an investigation. The earlier a concern is expressed, the easier it is to take action.

If, after speaking with his or her supervisor, the individual continues to have reasonable ground to believe the concern is still valid, the individual should report the concern to the University's Vice President of Finance and Business. In addition, if the individual is uncomfortable speaking with his or her supervisor, or the supervisor is a subject of the concern, the individual should report the concern directly to the Vice President of Finance and Business, President, or Chair of the Board of Trustees.

If the concern was reported orally to the Vice President of Finance and Business, the reporting individual, with assistance from the Vice President, shall put the concern in writing. The Vice President is required to report promptly the concern to the President, who has specific and exclusive responsibility to initiate an investigation of all concerns. Concerns may also be submitted anonymously. Such anonymous concerns should be in writing and sent directly to the Vice President of Finance and Business. If the Vice President of Finance and Business or a direct report of the Vice President of Finance and Business is the subject of a concern, the concern should be addressed to the President of the University. If the President of the University is the subject of a concern, the concern should be addressed to the Chair of the Board of Trustees.

Handling of Reported Violations

All reports will be promptly investigated, and appropriate corrective action will be recommended to the President if warranted by the investigation. If the President is the subject of

the concern, the Chair of the Board of Trustees will promptly investigate, and appropriate corrective action will be taken if warranted by the investigation. In addition, action taken must include a conclusion and/or follow-up with the complainant for complete closure of the concern.

Version History

Sun, 08/13/2023 - 22:08

Prohibition Against Improper Deductions

The University has a clearly communicated and company-wide policy that prohibits improper pay deductions from exempt employees' salaries. In general, exempt employees' salaries are not subject to reduction because of variations in the quality of work performed or the quantity of work performed. While seven exceptions to this rule exist under federal law (see the University's Human Resources Office if you have any questions about the general rule or the exceptions to the general rule), in general, an exempt employee will receive his or her full salary for any week in which the employee performs any work. Of course, exempt employees need not be paid for any workweek in which they perform no work. Subject to the provisions set forth above, deductions from an exempt employee's salary will not be made for time when work is not available if the employee is ready, willing, and able to work. As a general rule, if an employee who performs work for the University during the course of a week is absent at other times during the week when such absences are occasioned by the University or by the operating requirements of the business, the employee will be paid his or her full salary.

The University does not have an actual practice of making improper deductions from the salaries of exempt employees and strictly prohibits such a practice. It is the University's strong desire to pay each employee, exempt or non-exempt, the proper and appropriate pay. If an exempt employee believes that his salary has been improperly reduced, a complaint mechanism exists for employee complaints. First, the employee should contact the University's Director of Human Resources. If the matter has not been resolved to the employee's satisfaction, the employee may contact the Vice President of Finance and Business. The decision of the University's Vice President of Finance and Business will be final in matters regarding

allegations of improper deductions of the salaries of exempt employees. Any employee who is found to have been subject to improper deductions will be reimbursed by the University no later than the payday following the date that the determination of the improper deduction was first made. The University will make good-faith efforts to ensure compliance with the rules concerning deductions from the salaries of exempt employees in the future. Employees who believe that such efforts are not being made are urged to contact the University's Director of Human Resources.

Religious Accommodation

Policy Statement

Converse is committed to providing equal employment opportunities and a work environment that is free of unlawful harassment, discrimination, and retaliation. As such, Converse will make good faith efforts to provide reasonable Religious Accommodations and is committed to complying with all laws protecting employees' religious beliefs and practices as well as building and maintaining a welcoming and inclusive work environment.

Purpose

Converse respects the religious beliefs and practices of all employees and will make, on request, an accommodation for such observances when a reasonable accommodation is available that does not create an undue hardship on Converse's business.

Scope

All employees: Faculty, Staff, Graduate Assistants, and Student Employees.

Policy

- A. Converse will provide an exemption/ reasonable accommodation for employees' religious beliefs and practices, provided the requested accommodation is reasonable and does not create an undue hardship for the Converse or pose a direct threat to the health and/or safety of others in the workplace and/or to the requesting employee.

B. PROCEDURES

Requesting a Religious Accommodation

An employee whose religious beliefs or practices conflict with his or her job, work

schedule, or with Converse's policy or practice on dress and appearance, or with other aspects of employment, and who seeks a religious accommodation must submit a written [request for the accommodation](#) to his or her immediate supervisor. The written request will include the type of religious conflict that exists and the employee's suggested accommodation.

Providing Religious Accommodation

The immediate supervisor will evaluate the request, considering whether a work conflict exists due to a sincerely held religious belief or practice and whether an accommodation is available that is reasonable and that would not create an undue hardship on Converse's business. Accommodation may be a change in job, using paid leave, or leave without pay, allowing an exception to the dress and appearance code that does not affect safety requirements or other employment aspects. Depending on the type of conflict and suggested accommodation, the supervisor may confer with his or her manager and with the Human Resource Director. The supervisor and employee will meet to discuss the request and decision on an accommodation. If the employee accepts the proposed religious accommodation, the immediate supervisor will implement the decision. If the employee rejects the proposed accommodation, he or she may appeal following Converse's general grievance policy.

C. **RELATED RESOURCES**

[Staff Handbook](#) to see the Harassment Policy

[Faculty Handbook](#)

[Religious Accommodation Request Form](#)

D. **HISTORY**

Definitions and Acronyms

A. **DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS**

Religion: All aspects of religious observance and practice, as well as belief.

Religious Accommodation: A reasonable change in the work or academic environment or schedule that enables an individual covered by this Policy to practice or otherwise observe a sincerely held religious practice or belief without Undue Hardship on the University. It can also include any necessary modification to a University policy, the procedure, or other requirements for a covered individual's Religious Beliefs, observance, or practice provided such accommodation is reasonable

and does not cause an Undue Hardship.

Religious Beliefs: Religious Beliefs include moral or ethical beliefs as to what is right and wrong, which are sincerely held with the strength of traditional religious views. They include theistic as well as non-theistic beliefs.

Religious Practices: A religious practice is one motivated by a sincerely held religious belief, not any secular purpose. Certain practices may have both secular and religious motivations, which may require a case-by-case inquiry as to the purpose behind the practice.

Undue Hardship: Imposition of more than a de minimis cost on the University's operations, which may include those requests that are costly, compromise workplace safety, decrease workplace efficiency, infringe on the rights of other employees, or require other employees to do more than their fair share of the potentially hazardous or burdensome work.

Supervisor: the supervisor of record or appropriate authority (examples may be President, Vice President, Chair, Dean, Manager etc.).

Version History

Sun, 08/13/2023 - 22:24

April 27, 2021 Cabinet

Reporting Changes in Personal Information

Policy Owner Human Resources

Responsible Office(s) Human Resources

Policy

All employees are expected to immediately report any changes in the following personal information to the Human Resources Department or update in the Human Resource Information System (HRIS) iSolved: name or beneficiary designation, home address, or phone information tax withholding allowances, and emergency contact information.

Version History

Mon, 08/28/2023 - 18:51

Smoking/Tobacco Policy

Policy Owner Campus Safety

Responsible Office(s) Campus Safety, Human Resources, Provost

Policy Statement

Converse University seeks to provide a safe, healthy, and comfortable environment in which all members of our campus community can live and work. Converse University and The American University Health Association support the findings of the Surgeon General and acknowledge that any form of tobacco use, whether active or passive, is a significant health hazard. The Environmental Protection Agency and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health have both classified second-hand smoke as a known carcinogen (cancer-causing). The University realizes that a smoke and tobacco-free environment is a goal we can achieve through intentional and positive steps to ensure a healthier environment. In pursuit of this goal, Converse University has been a tobacco-free campus since August 1, 2012.

Policy

- I. The use of any tobacco products is prohibited on all University property. "University property" includes all buildings, facilities, grounds, and spaces leased, owned, or controlled by Converse University, whether or not signs are posted. This includes, but is not limited to: buildings on University-owned land, offices, classrooms, meeting rooms, laboratories, residential rooms and apartments, elevators, stairwells, balconies, decks, restrooms, bridges and walkways, sidewalks, parking structure/areas/lots, hallways, outdoor passageways and entrances, lobbies, common areas and athletic venues, including those with outdoor fixed seating.
- II. No ashtrays, receptacles, or smoking shelters will be permitted.
- III. The use of tobacco products is prohibited in University-owned, operated, or leased vehicles.
- IV. The use of tobacco products is prohibited in personal vehicles parked on University property.
- V. "Tobacco and smoking products" include all tobacco-derived or containing products, including, but not limited to, cigarettes (e.g., clove, bidis, kreteks), electronic cigarettes (Juuls, etc.), vaping devices, cigars, and cigarillos, pipes, water pipes, smokeless tobacco products or substitutions (spit and spit-less, chew, pouches, snuff) or any other device intended to simulate smoked

tobacco. This does not apply to nicotine replacement therapy, which is designed to assist tobacco users in quitting tobacco.

- VI. The sale or advertisement of tobacco and smoke products is prohibited on campus and in all University publications.
- VII. Enforcement of the policy is the responsibility of all members of the Converse community. Faculty, staff, and students are expected to uphold and enforce the policy for the health and safety of our campus.
- VIII. Campus Safety Officers may issue a smoking citation with a fine of \$25 when a violation is noted.
 - a. Failure on the part of faculty or staff to abide by the policy prohibiting the use of tobacco products may result in administrative action up to and including discharge.
 - b. Failure on the part of students to follow the policy prohibiting the use of tobacco products may result in a violation adjudicated by the appropriate board or administrative sanctioning, which could include but is not limited to community service, monetary fines, and/or suspension from the University.
 - c. Visitors to the campus who repeatedly violate the policy prohibiting the use of tobacco products may be asked to leave University property.
- IX. All campus event organizers should inform and advertise to outside groups that "Converse University is a Tobacco-Free campus."
- X. The provisions of this policy apply 24 hours a day, seven days a week to all students, faculty, staff, visitors, volunteers, contractors and vendors unless otherwise noted.
- XI. Continual violations of the policy may result in disciplinary action. Failure on the part of faculty or staff may result in administrative action up to and including discharge. Failure on the part of students to follow this policy may result in a violation adjudicated by the appropriate board or administrative sanctioning, which could include but is not limited to community service, monetary fines, and/or suspension from the University.

Version History

Sun, 08/13/2023 - 21:44

Solicitation and Distribution

Responsible Office(s) Human Resources, Provost

Policy

To eliminate any interference with the work of employees, (unless sanctioned by the University) soliciting and/or distributing literature, including email distribution, on University property is not permitted at any time by persons not employed by the University nor by employees during actual working time.

Version History

Sun, 08/13/2023 - 21:17

Solicitation Policy: Sponsorships, Promotional Items, Door Prizes, and Auction Items

Policy Owner Advancement Services

Responsible Office(s) Institutional Advancement

Policy Statement

To establish policies, procedures, and guidelines for all Converse community requests for Sponsorships, Promotional Items, Door Prizes, and Auction Items.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the rules and regulations for requests for external support in the form of sponsorships, promotional items, door prizes and auction items.

Converse University is surrounded by a generous business community that provides sponsorship and donations to various Converse groups, events and causes. Outreach to the business or greater community for sponsorships and donations should be planned and coordinated where reasons for sponsorships, promotional items, door prizes and/or auction items valued at \$250 or greater

should be related to incentivizing giving to the university or university-related causes. This coordination prevents donor fatigue and allows the University to take a more strategic approach to requests.

The Office of Institutional Advancement records and tracks all forms of sponsorships, donations, promotional items and discounts in order to

ensure appropriate stewardship and acknowledgement of the support received from the business community. Institutional Advancement also offers guidance for approaching and securing support from external entities.

Scope

This policy applies to all Converse students, faculty and staff, contractors, and any other person who conducts business on Converse's behalf.

Policy

All office/department/group special requests for support by local businesses (sponsorships, door prizes, auction items, etc.) equal to or greater than \$250 must approved by (1) the academic Dean (for faculty requests), Dean of Students (for student requests), or supervising Vice President (for staff requests) and (2) the Office of Institutional Advancement.

Requests must be submitted through the MyConverse site. To submit a request, navigate to MyConverse>Offices>Advancement>Forms: Sponsorships, Promotional Items, Door Prizes, and Auction Items Request Form. Fill out and submit for review.

Please allow 30 days for approval in your planning process for requests. The Office of Advancement Services will respond to your request and support next steps.

The Office of Advancement Services will also review and determine whether gifts to Converse are tax deductible or not based on whether the donor receives a benefit for their gift.

Contact advancement@converse.edu for questions or more information about this process.

Version History

Wed, 08/07/2024 - 20:15
TLC

Time and Effort Reporting

Policy Owner Provost, Office of Institutional Research

Policy Statement

The University is committed to ensuring that effort reports completed in connection with sponsored projects are accurate. Effort reports are required when any portion of compensation is paid from a sponsored project or cost-share is committed to a sponsored project. All faculty and staff who are involved in charging salaries and wages to sponsored projects, managing sponsored projects, or completing effort reports are responsible for understanding the principles of accurate and timely effort reporting.

An effort certification should be a reasonable estimate of how time is spent. In no case can the percentage of an individual's salary charged to a sponsored project exceed the percentage of the individual's total effort expended on the project during an effort reporting period. If the percentage of total effort expended in a given effort reporting period is less than the percentage of salary charged to the sponsored project during the same period, the salary charges must be reduced via the salary redistribution process to reflect the actual effort.

Effort reports are generated for all employees (excluding those required to complete timesheets) with compensation paid from a sponsored project during the reporting period. Principal Investigators, faculty, or a person with first-hand knowledge of individual activities certifies effort reports for individuals whose salaries are charged to sponsored projects. Effort reports are generated and distributed within a reasonable time frame following the close of the reporting cycle. Certification of effort must be completed within three (3) weeks of distribution.

Scope

As a recipient of federal funding, Converse University is required to comply with cost accounting requirements contained in 2 CFR 200.430 - Compensation-Personal Services, and Uniform Guidance Subpart E §200.430, for certifying time spent working on sponsored projects. The purpose of this policy is to ensure those effort certifications completed in connection with Converse University sponsored projects are accurate, reasonably reflect the actual level of effort expended on a sponsored project, and comply with sponsor requirements.

Policy

Converse University periodically certifies effort after the fact, ensuring that charges made to sponsored funds and effort expended are at least equal to the salary paid on sponsored funds. At the end of each reporting period, effort reports are generated via spreadsheets. These effort reports are verified by the business administrator and released to department or University administrators for review.

An effort report is generated only for employees who have received payments from at least one sponsored fund during the reporting period. Any significant differences between the actual effort expended and the salary distribution reported on the effort report must be documented in the notes section of the effort report and reported to the Cost Analysis staff in GCA. In addition, the department or, in some cases, the University research office staff is responsible for initiating payroll redistributions to correct the differences in order to ensure accurate reporting of effort.

For employees only paid from non-sponsored funding to report effort expended on a sponsored project (i.e., cost-share), a request to the Business services staff must be made to generate the necessary effort report(s).

Failure to Comply

Effort reporting is a high-risk audit item because salary charges to sponsored funds are significant. Financial penalties, expenditure disallowances, and harm to the University's reputation could result from failure to provide accurate effort certifications or failure to comply with the University's effort reporting requirements. Failure to comply with this policy may result in the suspension of proposal submission privileges for the PI, suspension of work on a sponsored project, and/or disallowance of a salary cost and transfer to a departmental fund.

Version History

Sun, 08/13/2023 - 22:20

Worker's Compensation

Policy Owner Human Resources
Responsible Office(s) Human Resources

Policy

Converse University employees are covered by applicable workers' compensation laws, which may entitle them to receive medical attention and pay in the event of an injury sustained while carrying out their assigned work duties at the University. The University assumes the cost of the benefit by providing benefits through a workers' compensation insurance policy.

In order to be eligible to receive workers' compensation insurance benefits, an employee who is injured while carrying out his/her duties at the University must file a report with his supervisor as soon as possible after the injury, preferably within twenty-four (24) hours of injury. Failure to immediately report an accident or injury may subject the employee to discipline, up to and including termination, and may subject the employee to a denial of workers' compensation benefits. In addition to reporting to the supervisor, all injuries must be reported to the Director of Human Resources (telephone extension 9029) by the employee or the supervisor of an injured employee as soon as possible, preferably within twenty-four (24) hours. The illness/injury must be recorded using the [Employee Incident Report](#) located on my.converse. Failure to report the injury to Human Resources immediately could affect the employee's right to receive benefits.

Process of Reporting Work-Related Injuries:

If an injury is serious or there is a life-threatening medical emergency, contact Campus Safety immediately at 864.596.9026 and/or dial (8) 9-1-1 and proceed to be taken to the nearest emergency medical care facility.

For non-serious injuries, treatment must be obtained through the Wellness Center. If more advanced care is needed, the injured employee must visit one of our designated Occupational Care providers listed on my.converse, Risk Management section of the Human Resources page. Please note prior authorization is required. Time spent in the treatment of an injury caused by an on-the-job accident, as well as any necessarily related absence that same day, is considered work/compensable time.

If it is determined by the designated occupational care provider that the injured employee is required to miss work, then the employee will receive no pay for the first seven (7) calendar days. Earned sick leave may be used. The Worker's Compensation Carrier will begin Lost

Wage Benefits after the seven-day waiting period. If absence from injury is fourteen (14) or more calendar days, pay will be retroactive to day one. No duplicate payments to employees (i.e., payments of sick leave or vacation leave in addition to workers' compensation leave) will be made.

If the treating physician requires an injured employee to work alternative duties while recovering from their injuries, the University shall make every attempt to accommodate the employee. Injured workers are required to provide work status reports from the physician to their supervisor and Human Resources after every visit.

Version History

Sun, 08/13/2023 - 22:12

Zero Tolerance for Workplace Violence, Firearms, other Weapons, and Fireworks

Policy Owner Campus Safety

Responsible Office(s) Campus Safety, Human Resources, Provost

Policy

Workplace violence is unlawful and is against University policy. Violent behavior will not be tolerated. Any employee who instigates or participates in workplace violence may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination, and may also be subject to any applicable criminal charges. In addition, the University does not tolerate abusive or offensive comments, threats, or stalking. Any employee who instigates or participates in abusive or offensive comments, threats, or stalking may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination, as well as any applicable criminal charges.

All employees, except Campus Safety Officers, are prohibited from using, displaying, or carrying firearms or any other lethal weapons on any University property. Employees or visitors carrying or possessing any weapons will be denied access to University premises. Campus Safety Officers shall only be allowed to carry or possess pre-authorized weapons on University property and shall do so in a manner that complies with all applicable laws, regulations, and University policies.

An employee who knows or suspects that an actual or potential violation of this policy should immediately report any such knowledge or suspicion to his or her supervisor or vice-president, to Campus Safety, or to some combination thereof.

All fireworks are prohibited on campus unless sanctioned for a campus event. Employees who violate this prohibition may be disciplined and discharged for such conduct.

Please note that House Bill 3594 was signed by SC Governor McMaster on March 7, 2024. It authorizes individuals who are not otherwise prohibited from possessing a firearm, to legally possess a firearm openly or concealed without training and without a concealed weapons permit issued by SLED. This legislation does not apply on Converse property or any Converse function held off campus.

Converse University remains "No Firearms on Campus" per University policy. The only exception to this policy is licensed Campus Safety Officers on - or off-duty or auxiliary officers. Signage is located at East Main St., Drayton Ave., Fairview entrance to Belk Lot, Twichell Lot at Fairview, and the Weisiger entrance to campus. Firearms are prohibited for students, including vehicles anywhere on campus, as per the student, faculty, administrative and staff handbooks. Anyone seen with, or known to have, a firearm on campus will be asked to leave immediately, regardless of campus status.

Version History

Sun, 08/13/2023 - 21:45