

# BOARD OF REGENTS BRIEFING PAPER

## 1. AGENDA ITEM TITLE: HANDBOOK Revision: Grants-in-Aid – Professional Staff

MEETING DATE: June 7-8, 2018, Board of Regents Meeting

## 2. BACKGROUND & POLICY CONTEXT OF ISSUE:

Existing Board policy provides grants in aid (GIA) for professional staff and certain dependents (*Title 4, Chapter 3, Section 12*). The policy restricts professional staff members to no more than six credits in fall and spring semesters. In addition, the policy provides that professional staff members employed under an “A” contract are limited to three credits for a GIA across all summer semesters.

The Chancellor, in consultation with the Council of Presidents, recommends allowing professional staff members to take an additional three credits under the GIA program in the fall, spring and summer semesters on a case by case basis with the approval of the institutional president if the professional staff member is enrolled in a degree program designed for working professionals.

## 3. SPECIFIC ACTIONS BEING RECOMMENDED OR REQUESTED:

Amend Title 4, Chapter 3, Section 12 to allow professional staff members to take an additional three credits under the GIA program in the fall, spring and summer semesters on a case by case basis with the approval of the institutional president if the professional staff member is enrolled in a degree program designed for working professionals. See the attached policy proposal.

## 4. IMPETUS (WHY NOW?):

The Chancellor, in consultation with the Council of Presidents, recommends this policy revision to support NSHE professional staff who are pursuing a degree program designed for working professionals.

## 5. CHECK THE NSHE STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL THAT IS SUPPORTED BY THIS REQUEST:

- Access (Increase participation in post-secondary education)
- Success (Increase student success)
- Close the Achievement Gap (Close the achievement gap among underserved student populations)
- Workforce (Collaboratively address the challenges of the workforce and industry education needs of Nevada)
- Research (Co-develop solutions to the critical issues facing 21<sup>st</sup> century Nevada and raise the overall research profile)
- Not Applicable to NSHE Strategic Plan Goals

## INDICATE HOW THE PROPOSAL SUPPORTS THE SPECIFIC STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL

This policy revision is applicable to NSHE staff only and not specific to any of the strategic plan goals.

## 6. BULLET POINTS TO SUPPORT REQUEST/RECOMMENDATION:

- This policy revision offers modest financial support to NSHE professional staff pursuing degree programs for working professionals by allowing an increase in the number of credits allowed under NSHE’s GIA program. Such an increase may enable staff to complete their degrees more quickly.
- The policy revision is limited with its case-by-case authorization because professional staff members will only be allowed to take the additional credits with the approval of the institutional president who will have the discretion to determine whether the circumstances meet the requirements of Board policy, including whether the program is designed for working professionals.
- The policy revision demonstrates the Board’s support for degree programs designed for working professionals, which is reflective of Nevada’s demographics that include a high number of individuals who are working and simultaneously pursuing their education.
- Promoting the educational achievement of NSHE professional staff serves to benefit the students with whom these professionals are working as they will be better prepared academically to meet student needs.

## 7. POTENTIAL ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE REQUEST/RECOMMENDATION:

None have been presented.

**8. ALTERNATIVE(S) TO WHAT IS BEING REQUESTED/RECOMMENDED:**

Do not approve the proposed policy revision and retain the existing credit limitation.

**9. RECOMMENDATION FROM THE CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE:**

The Chancellor's Office recommends support for this policy revision.

**10. COMPLIANCE WITH BOARD POLICY:**

- Consistent With Current Board Policy: Title #\_\_\_\_\_ Chapter #\_\_\_\_\_ Section #\_\_\_\_\_
- ✓ Amends Current Board Policy: Title 4, Chapter 3, Section 12
- Amends Current Procedures & Guidelines Manual: Chapter #\_\_\_\_\_ Section #\_\_\_\_\_
- Other:\_\_\_\_\_
- ✓ Fiscal Impact: Yes X No \_\_\_\_\_

Explain: The potential impact is unknown at this time and will depend on how many staff increase the number of credits under the grants in aid program as allowed by the policy revision.

**POLICY PROPOSAL**  
**TITLE 4, CHAPTER 3, SECTION 12**  
Grants-in-Aid – Professional Staff and Dependents

Additions appear in *boldface italics*; deletions are [~~stricken~~ and bracketed]

**Section 12. Grants-In-Aid – Professional Staff and Dependents**

1. The following classifications for professional staff are eligible for grants-in-aid as defined by this section:
  - a. Professional staff members who are on an “A” or “B” contract for at least .50 FTE employment;
  - b. Professional staff members who are on sabbatical or leave of absence without pay;
  - c. Emeritus faculty and emeritus professional staff;
  - d. Adjunct and clinical faculty, including joint faculty appointments within the University of Nevada, Reno School of Medicine or the UNLV School of Medicine; and
  - e. Retired professional staff members who are age 55 or over at the time of retirement and have at least 20 years of NSHE service.

....
8. Except as otherwise provided, professional staff members as defined in this section are restricted to no more than six credits in the fall and spring semesters. Professional staff members employed under an “A” contract shall be limited to three credits for a grant-in-aid across all summer semesters. *Upon approval by the institutional President or his or her designee, on a case by case basis, professional staff members enrolled in a degree program designed for working professionals may also take an additional three credits in the fall, spring and summer semesters.* Professional staff members employed under a “B” contract are not limited in the number of credits that are grant-in-aid eligible during all summer sessions. There shall be no restriction on the number of credit hours a spouse or financially dependent child may register for under this policy. Upon approval by the institutional President, community college faculty while on sabbatical may take additional courses under this policy if for professional development.