

Waiver of Tuition and Fees

University Operations – Financial Management

CWU Policy 202-10

Effective: February 1, 2017

Policy Review Date: YEAR

Policy Executive: Senior Vice President – Finance and Administration

Responsible Office/Unit: Director of State Reporting

Policy Statement:

Applicability:

Content:

Policy

Appendix A – Waiver of Tuition and Fees Procedure

(1) The university is authorized to award tuition and state mandated fee waivers within fiscal and legislative limitations. Waivers are given in accordance with either, (1) standards established by the university, or (2) directives of the state legislature. This policy is established for the purpose of directing the actions of university officials in awarding waivers. See Appendix A for procedures on the waiver of tuition and fees.

(2) General Guidelines

- A. Tuition and fee waivers mandated by the legislature must be awarded in accordance with the criteria and limitations specified in the applicable statutes.
- B. When the university participates in discretionary tuition and fee waiver programs permitted by the legislature, awards must conform to the applicable sections of RCW 28B.15 and Appendix A.
- C. Total available funds allocated for ALL tuition and fee waivers shall be as determined through the normal budgeting process and in accordance with applicable state laws and with the delegation to the president of tuition and fee waiver authority by the board of trustees.
- D. The vice president of business and financial affairs (VPBFA) and the vice president of enrollment management are responsible for submitting, by October 31, an annual report to the president of awards granted during the previous academic year, including evidence of how the procedures (Appendix A) were followed. All references to the VPBFA and VPEM shall include the ability to designate the responsibility to another position.

- E. The Business and Finance Committee is tasked by the VPBFA and the VPEM with recommending procedures and recommendations relating to discretionary tuition and fee waiver programs and with monitoring specific waiver programs.

(3) Waiver Authority

A. Sections 910 and 915 Waiver Authority

1. Section 910 - RCW 28B.15.910 [section 910] authorizes CWU to waive up to 10% of total gross operating fee revenues under the specific statutory tuition and fee waiver programs set forth under RCW 28B.15.910(2), including resident and nonresident graduate assistant tuition waivers under RCW 28B.15.615 and 28B.15.014(1), [sections 615 and 014], and also discretionary waivers authorized under RCW 28B.15.740 [section 740].
2. Section 915 - In addition to waivers granted under authority of section 910, RCW 28B.15.915, [section 915] authorizes CWU to waive all or part of the operating fee portion of undergraduate or graduate student tuition “for any student.” There is no state general fund support for section 915 waivers (West Waivers).

B. Sections 615 and 014 Waiver Authority

1. Section 615 - Pursuant to RCW 28B.15.615 [section 615], CWU may waive up to 100% of resident operating fees for resident graduate students who are awarded graduate assistantships. The waiver is renewable for continuing students. Resident graduate students with financial need may also receive need-based aid with equivalent reduction of the graduate assistant operating fee waiver. Exceptions may authorized by the director of financial aid.
2. Section 014 - Pursuant to RCW 28B.15.615 and 28B.15.014(1), CWU may waive up to 100% of resident operating fees, plus up to 100% of the non-resident tuition differential, for non-resident graduate students who are awarded graduate assistantships. Tuition differential waivers are renewable for continuing students with the approval of the dean of graduate studies and research.

C. Section 740 Waiver Authority

1. Section 740 waivers may be awarded for the following purposes:
 - a. Need-Based Tuition Waivers
 - i. Pursuant to sections 910 and 740(1), CWU may waive all or part of undergraduate and graduate student tuition and fees for needy students who are eligible for resident tuition and fee rates. In the aggregate, but within available funding as determined by VPBFA and VPEM, section 740(1) waivers for needy resident students shall be based on federal and state criteria for the objective demonstration of financial need and are subject to the overall 10% limit under section 910.
 - b. Other Student Waivers
 - i. Pursuant to sections 910 and 740(1), CWU may waive all or part of student tuition and fees for “other students,” except on the basis of participation in intercollegiate athletics programs. In the aggregate, section 740(1) waivers for

“other students” normally may not exceed 1% of total gross operating fee revenues, subject to the overall 10% limit under section 910.

- c. Institutional Error Waivers
 - i. Section 740(1) tuition and fee waivers may be authorized on a case by case basis for the purpose of correcting institutional errors in financial aid awarding, or errors in other administrative and/or academic procedures, where such correction may be necessary to make the student “whole” or to resolve actual or potential disputes. Institutional error waivers must be documented in writing and approved by the VPBFA and VPEM together with a plan of correction to prevent similar errors from occurring in the future.
 - d. Athletics Gender Equity Waivers
 - i. Waiver of tuition and fees for the purpose of achieving or maintaining gender equity in intercollegiate athletics programs: Section 740(2) gender equity waivers may not exceed 1% of gross operating fee revenues, subject to the overall 10% limit under Section 910. Distribution of the section 740(2) waiver pool, if any, will be determined by the president (or designee) in accordance with applicable state laws.
 - e. Section 915 Waiver Authority (West Waivers)
 - i. Pursuant to RCW 28B.15.915 [Section 915], CWU may waive all or part of the “operating fee” portion of undergraduate and graduate student tuition for any student. Section 915 waivers may not be used to waive the “building fee” portion of student tuition or the student services & activities fee.
2. Section 915 waivers may be awarded for the following purposes:

(4) Institutional Merit Awards

A. General Limitations and Requirements include:

1. Institutional merit waivers may only be used to waive the operating fee portion of tuition.
2. Institutional merit waivers require satisfactory academic progress (SAP) each term to maintain eligibility.
3. Institutional merit waivers may be combined with institutional need-based tuition waivers and other institutional grants and scholarships.
4. The BFC will provide annual institutional waiver recommendations to the VPBFA and VPEM during each fall term.

B. New Undergraduate Student Merit Awards

1. Within available funding, the VPBFA and VPEM will create and monitor merit-based awards offered to admitted resident and non-resident new undergraduate students during the recruitment process to encourage and reward academic merit.

C. New Graduate Student Merit Awards

1. Within available funding, the VPBFA and VPEM, and the dean of graduate studies and research, will create and monitor merit-based awards offered to admitted resident and non-resident new graduate students during the recruitment process to encourage and reward academic merit.

D. College/Departmental Awards

1. Within available funding, the academic deans and their department chairs are authorized to waive up to 100% of the operating fee portion of undergraduate and graduate student tuition of new or continuing students. Awards will be made based on selection criteria developed by the deans/athletic director in consultation with department chairs. Department chairs, through their respective deans, will submit annual reports to the VPBFA and VPEM documenting the specific waivers offered with reference to the approved selection criteria. The VPBFA and VPEM, will periodically review college/departmental awards and will notify the deans and department chairs of any identified questions or concerns about the awarding procedures.

E. Enrollment Management Waivers

1. On recommendation of the VPBFA and VPEM, CWU may waive up to 100% of the operating fee portion of tuition for new and continuing domestic students to meet institutional recruitment, retention, or programmatic needs that promote the effective utilization of other funding sources and/or the achievement of state and other workforce production goals.

F. CWU Employee Dependents and Retiree Waivers

1. CWU may waive a portion of tuition for eligible employee dependents and faculty/staff retirees as set forth in [CWU 301-03](#) and Appendix A.

G. Non-Resident and International Student Waivers

1. Non-Resident Undergraduate Waiver Program

- a. CWU may waive the operating fee portion of the non-resident tuition differential sufficient to reduce non-resident tuition up to 1.5 times resident tuition for domestic non-resident undergraduate students from non-WUE (Western Undergraduate Exchange Program) states are attending a CWU campus. The waiver may be combined with other institutionally funded merit and grant aid up to the equivalent of 100% of the non-resident tuition differential, or under the west waiver, allow up to 100% of the operating fee portion of tuition.

2. Non-Resident Graduate Waiver Program

- a. CWU may waive the operating fee portion of the non-resident tuition differential sufficient to reduce non-resident tuition up to 1.25 times resident tuition for domestic non-resident graduate students who do not have graduate assistantships and who are enrolled in residential or online programs. The waiver is renewable for continuing students as determined by the dean of graduate studies & research and may be combined with other institutionally funded merit and grant aid up to the equivalent of 100% of the non-resident tuition differential, or under the west waiver, allow up to 100% of the operating fee portion of tuition.

3. International Student Waiver Program

- a. CWU may waive the operating fee portion of the non-resident tuition differential sufficient to reduce non-resident tuition up to 1.5 times resident tuition for undergraduate, and up to 1.25 times for graduate international students who are enrolled in residential or online programs. The waiver is renewable for continuing students as determined by the director of financial aid.

4. CWU On-Line Waiver Program

- a. CWU may waive operating fees up to the equivalent of 100% of the non-resident tuition differential for domestic non-resident undergraduate students enrolled in CWU on-line programs. This tuition waiver is for students enrolled exclusively in a CWU on-line program who do not attend a CWU campus. The waiver is renewable for continuing students as determined by the director of financial aid and may be combined with other institutionally funded merit waivers. Qualifying on-line programs will be determined by the associate provost.

5. Veteran's Service Waiver Program

- a. CWU may waive operating fees up to the equivalent of 100% of the non-resident tuition differential for documented U.S. veterans and their dependents. Eligibility is determined by the office of veteran's services. Waiver is renewable for continuing students as determined by the director of financial aid and may be combined with other institutionally funded merit and grant aid.

H. Campus-Based Awards

1. On recommendation of the VPBFA and VPBM, CWU may waive up to 100% of the non-resident tuition differential, or under the west waiver, allow up to 100% of the operating fee portion of tuition for undergraduate students selected for participation in recognized campus-based programs and activities, including, but not limited to the following:
 - a. Talented students participating in competitive campus club programs (such as Rodeo Club) and club sports (such as Rugby).
 - b. Students participating in competitive CWU sponsored programs such as Girls/Boys State, Business Week, Science Quest Summer Camp, Robotics, and Knowledge Bowls such as Apple Cup, etc.
 - c. Students participating in and demonstrating academic success in dual credit high school/college enrollment programs, such as CWU Running Start, Cornerstone, and students enrolling at CWU through community college partnerships.

(5) Conflict of Interest and Related Policies

- A. To manage actual or perceived conflicts of interest in the awarding of discretionary tuition and fee waivers, the [Ethics in Public Services law \(RCW 24.52\)](#) and [CWU 701-08 Ethical Conduct Standards](#) will be followed. This includes but is not limited to
 1. No CWU employee may use his or her position to secure special privileges or exemptions for himself or herself, or for his or her spouse, child, family members, or other persons. Nor may

any employee have an interest, financial or otherwise, direct or indirect, or engage in a business transaction or professional activity, or incur an obligation of any nature that is in conflict with the proper discharge of the employee's official duties.

2. No CWU employee may authorize a discretionary tuition or fee waiver on behalf of any student with whom the employee has a close family, business, or other personal relationship. Such personal relationships must be disclosed and the waiver recommendation referred for approval by the VPBFA and VPEM (or other disinterested Cabinet-level administrator).
- B. Discrimination against, or granting preferential treatment, to any individual or group based on protected group status is prohibited pursuant to [WAC 106-72-004 Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination](#), [CWU 403-01 Equal Opportunity Policy Statement](#) and Washington Law against Discrimination, RCW 49.60.400.

History:

08/03/2011: Pres Cab: 12/93; 1/94, PAC: 3/4/09; Responsibility: (2017) Enrollment Management, Business and Financial Affairs: Cabinet/UPAC; Reviewed/Endorsed by: Cabinet/UPAC; Review/Effective Date: 01/02/2013; 02/01/17; Approved by: James L. Gaudino, President
Reformatted and Assigned new Policy Number - Previous Policy CWUP 2-20-090, June 2025
Attached Procedure CWUR 5-10-010 as Appendix A, June 2025

Appendix A - Waiver of Tuition and Fees Procedure

- (1) This university procedure is established for the purpose of directing the actions of university officials in awarding discretionary tuition and fee waivers pursuant to applicable state laws and CWU 202-10.
- (2) Central Washington University uses discretionary tuition waivers to advance the goals of the University's Strategic Plan. The criteria for determining types and amounts of waiver awards shall be based on the University's Strategic Plan, specifically as stated in the CWU Mission statement, vision and core values that guide our work, and the Enrollment Management Plan.

(3) General Guidelines

- A. The vice president of business and financial affairs (VPBFA) and the vice president of enrollment management (VPEM) shall develop an Annual Tuition Waiver Plan, including budget and award criteria, in the academic year prior to the plan implementation year. The Annual Tuition Waiver Plan sets out waiver categories, criteria for award, awarding authority, budget, and information relevant to adoption of the plan and its successful implementation during the plan year.
- B. The Annual Tuition Waiver Plan shall be presented to the BFC for its review at the September meeting of the BFC. The BFC shall make recommendations to the president and cabinet during the month of October after fall census data is available for assessment of outcomes. The president has final approval authority.
- C. Funding for university discretionary waivers will be jointly determined by the vice president of business and financial affairs and the vice president of enrollment management, in consultation with the president and cabinet and guided by the budget and finance committee (BFC).

(4) Waiver Authority

- A. Sections 910 and 915 Waiver Authority
 1. Section 910 - CWU may waive up to the amount listed in the Annual Tuition Waiver Plan of total gross operating fee revenues under the specific statutory tuition and fee waiver programs set forth under [RCW 28B.15.910\(2\)](#).
 2. Section 915 - CWU may waive up to the amount listed in the Annual Tuition Waiver Plan of total gross operation fee revenues under the specific statutory tuition and fee waiver programs set forth under [RCW 28B.15.915](#).
- B. Section 615 and Section 014 Waiver Authority Programs
 1. Section 615 - Resident Graduate Assistant Waivers
 - a. CWU may waive up to the percent listed in the Annual Tuition Waiver Plan of total gross operation fee revenues under the specific statutory tuition and fee waiver programs set forth under [RCW 28B.15.615](#). Eligibility shall be authorized by the dean of graduate studies and research with responsibility for award processing and monitoring by the director of financial aid.
 2. Section 014 - Non-resident Graduate Assistant (Non-resident Tuition Differential) Waivers

- a. CWU may waive up to the percent listed in the Annual Tuition Waiver Plan of total gross operation fee revenues under the specific statutory tuition and fee waiver programs set forth under [RCW 28B.15.014](#). Eligibility shall be authorized by the dean of graduate studies and research with procedures created and monitored by the director of financial aid.

(5) Section 740 Waiver Authority

A. Need-Based Tuition Waivers:

1. CWU may waive up to the percent listed in the Annual Tuition Waiver Plan of total gross operation fee revenues under the specific statutory tuition and fee waiver programs set forth under [RCW 28B.15.740](#) for need-based waivers for residents of Washington State. In the aggregate, section 740(1) waivers for needy resident students should be based on the Student's Free Federal Application for Financial Aid (FAFSA) documented need as expressed by the Expected Family Contribution (EFC) and/or Washington State Need Grant eligibility criteria. These waivers must be within available funding as determined by VPBFA. The director of financial aid will monitor and process the award. The funding for need-based tuition waivers will normally be equal to or greater than the aggregate of funding for "merit" awards made under Section 740(1), subject to the overall 10% limit under Section 910

B. Mandatory and Other Student Waivers:

1. CWU may waive up to the percent listed in the Annual Tuition Waiver Plan of total gross operation fee revenues under the specific statutory tuition and fee waiver programs set forth under [RCW 28B.15.740](#). This amount may vary dependent on legislation and available funding as determined by VPBFA, and monitoring and award processing by the director of financial aid.

C. Institutional Error Waivers:

1. Institutional error waivers will be authorized by the VPEM.

D. Athletics Gender Equity Waivers:

1. CWU may waive up to the percent listed in the Annual Tuition Waiver Plan of total gross operation fee revenues under the specific statutory tuition and fee waiver programs set forth under [RCW 28B.15.070](#). Awarding by the athletic director will be in coordination with the director of financial aid.

- E. Section 915 (West) Waivers Within available funding as determined by VPBFA and VPEM, and monitored by the director of financial aid, CWU may waive up to 100% of the operating fee portion of undergraduate or graduate student tuition for any student who meets the published criteria, or who qualifies due to personal circumstances or institutional need. Awards may be granted for new and continuing students. This requires a minimum of an annual 2.75 cumulative undergraduate GPA, or an annual 3.0 cumulative graduate GPA to automatically maintain quarterly merit eligibility. The director of financial aid, with approval by the VPEM and/or program directors may waive GPA and satisfactory academic progress criteria based on professional judgment.

(6) Institutional Merit Awards

- A. Presumptive eligibility for institutional merit awards will normally be based on admission index ranges (AI), or similar objective criteria, for first-time students applying for admission to a matriculated program, and are subject to application deadlines and available funding. Presumptive eligibility for merit awards will normally be based on cumulative college-level coursework GPA for transfer students applying for admission to a matriculated program, and are subject to application deadlines and available funding.
- B. Awards may be made outside the AI or GPA ranges, and/or for late applying students, in the exercise of “professional judgment” for such purposes as attaining enrollment goals, which may include diversifying the student body, strengthening specific academic or co-curricular programs, or achieving equity in recognition of extenuating individual circumstances. Extenuating individual circumstances may include factors that may reasonably be considered to have adversely affected a student’s AI/GPA, such as a personal or family illness, homelessness, English as a second language, or similar considerations. Evidence of academic challenge and persistence may also be considered—for example, a student who might reasonably be expected to have achieved a higher AI/GPA had the student attended a more challenging high school or had the student taken a substantially less rigorous schedule of high school courses.
- C. Professional judgment will be exercised in a manner similar to the professional judgment authorized under the Higher Education Act (HEA) for purposes of adjusting a student’s level of eligibility for Title IV funds. The reason for the adjustment must be documented in the student’s file and must relate to the special circumstances that differentiate that particular student from other students. Adjustments must be made on a case by case basis, not by establishing automatic categories of special circumstances and providing identical outcomes to all students in those circumstances. Such adjustments must be approved in writing by the VPPEM and may not be made to circumvent regulations or eligibility requirements applicable to other financial aid programs.