

JSU FACULTY SENATE 2023-2024  
Recommendation #2324-02

**Recommendation Regarding the Tuition Assistance Program Policy Number 1:03:02**

Whereas, the current “Potential Payback Obligation” provision that “if an Eligible Employee does not remain employed at JSU for two years from the date of the last tuition assistance received (whether for the Eligible Employee or Eligible Dependent), the Employee shall be required to reimburse JSU for the amount of the tuition benefit received”

- Is inequitable because it takes into account neither the number of years an employee has worked at JSU before the tuition assistance is used (e.g., an employee with 20 years of employment at JSU before using tuition assistance has the same 2-year payback obligation as a person with 1 year of employment at JSU using tuition assistance), nor the many variations that can occur in the timing of when tuition assistance is used over an extended employment period, and
- Could result in difficulties when an employee leaves JSU owing payback, both for the employee in finding the money required and for JSU in collecting it, and
- Could result in disputes and bad feelings regarding the interpretation and enforcement in individual cases of the ambiguously phrased qualification in this provision that “The Payback Obligation may not apply if the Employee is terminated as part of a reorganization or reduction in force or service retirement”, and
- Could force an eligible dependent who is also an employee to decide between two penalties: using their own benefit to avoid paying considerable fees, and using their spouse’s or parent’s benefit to avoid having to wait two years after earning a degree or other credential from JSU to use that credential to seek a better job,

The JSU Faculty Senate recommends that the eligibility condition that an employee be

“A full-time, benefit eligible employee of JSU or JSU’s ROTC department with at least one (1) year of full-time service”

Be changed to read that an employee be

“A full-time, benefit eligible employee of JSU or JSU’s ROTC department with at least two (2) years of full-time service”

And that the “Potential Payback Obligation” section be removed from the policy.