

ARTICLE 6
EDUCATIONAL/PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

A. GENERAL CONDITIONS

1. Nurses are encouraged to pursue professional development and education in relation to their career in health care.
2. Nurses shall be reimbursed for the costs of educational programs required and approved by the University. Time spent in such educational programs shall be considered time worked.
3. Nurses attending University courses or seminars shall be eligible for fee reductions applicable to other nurses at their campus/Laboratory.
4. Nothing in this Article shall prevent the University from granting additional professional development and/or educational opportunities.

B. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATIONAL TIME

1. Each calendar year, nurses appointed at ninety percent (90%) time or more shall receive forty (40) hours to be used for paid professional development and educational leave. Such hours shall be prorated for nurses appointed at less than 90%, based on their appointment rate. Such hours may not be accumulated from year-to-year.
2. **Use of Professional/Educational Development Time** – A nurse who has completed her/his probationary period, who wishes to participate in a professional/educational development program, and who meets the qualifications listed below, shall request advance approval in accordance with departmental procedures.
3. **Professional and Educational Development Time**
 - a. must be scheduled according to staffing requirements; however, the University shall make reasonable efforts to accommodate requests,
 - b. may be used to participate in hospital-sponsored in-service training which is not required by the University, subject to the availability of funds, and,
 - c. When a nurse requests educational leave time on her/ his scheduled day off, in accordance with this article, such request shall be granted.
4. Professional Development and Educational time shall not be considered time worked for the purpose of overtime accrual or pay.
 - a. When a nurse has been released from work to attend a professional development or educational program of at least eight (8) hours, the nurse may use professional/educational development hours equal to her/his full shift.
 - b. When a nurse has been released from her/his scheduled shift to attend a course of less than eight (8) hours, the nurse will receive professional/development hours equal to the hours in the course. In such instance, the nurse may use accumulated compensatory time to cover the difference between the hours of professional development hours used and the hours in her/his regular schedule.
 - c. When a nurse participates in a professional/educational development program on the nurse's day off, the nurse may use professional /educational development hours equal to the hours of the course.
 - d. Up to twelve (12) hours of the forty (40) hours maximum of paid time may be utilized for appropriate home study/internet courses.
 - e. A nurse who is enrolled in a degree program (BSN or MSN) at an accredited nursing school may use up to the annual forty (40) hour maximum paid leave for appropriate home study/internet courses which are part of the required curriculum for the degree program. The nurse will be required to verify that such course(s) are part of a degree program.

5. Nurses who are scheduled to take the examination which would grant a state and/or nationally recognized certification, and who request the examination day off in accordance with the unit's scheduling procedures, shall be assigned paid professional/educational development time for the day on which the examination is taken.

C. WORK SCHEDULE CHANGES FOR USE OF EDUCATIONAL TIME

1. A nurse, assigned to the evening or night shift, who is scheduled for a continuing education course or a certification examination, shall be scheduled off from the evening or night shift immediately preceding or following the course or examination with the exception of home study/internet courses when:
 - a. The unit scheduling policies have been followed; and
 - b. The course is at least six (6) hours duration outside scheduled work time; or
 - c. The examination is conducted by a state or nationally recognized professional organization.
2. When a nurse is enrolled in a formal education program which culminates in a higher degree, the University shall endeavor to modify the nurse's work schedule to accommodate the participation in such program.