# Civilian Tuition Assistance Program (CTAP)
## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
### (Current as of 5 November 2020)

**Q1. Who may be eligible to request TA under the CTAP?**
A1. Air Force permanent full-time appropriated fund employees are eligible, excluding Air Force (AF) Palace Acquire (PAQ) Interns, Copper Cap (COP) Interns, and employees assigned to Acquisition Professional Development Program (APDP) coded positions. However, employees assigned to APDP coded positions seeking coursework at the Doctorate level, are eligible for CTAP. For additional information on PAQ/COP programs and APDP, reach out to your Career Field Team (CFT) point of contact.

- For additional information on Acquisition Civilian TA, go to the Acquisition Civilian Portal: https://www.my.af.mil/gcss-af/USAF/content/edoptuition.
    - o **Note:** Students that do not meet the three-year eligibility requirement are eligible for CTAP and should contact their respective CFT, as needed.

**Q2. How much may I request in TA funding?**
A2. TA is available for two (2) courses per semester/quarter and has separate dollar limits for semester hours and quarter hours. The maximum assistance per semester hour is $250 and $166 per quarter hour. The exact amount for each is 75% per hour as long as that 75% does not exceed $250 per semester hour or $166 per quarter hour. The student is responsible for all remaining costs. There is an annual limit of $4,500 per fiscal year. TA is funded at 100% for credit-by-exam testing fees at an on-base and/or fully funded testing center.

**Q3. At what level may course(s) be submitted for TA funding?**
A3. TA funding may only be submitted for courses at the associate, bachelor's, master's (includes Juris Doctorate), or doctorate degree level. However, TA will not be approved for courses at a level lower or equal to a degree already attained. For example, if a TA request is submitted for a course at the associate degree level and the individual already has a bachelor's degree, the TA funding request will not be approved.

**Q4. May I request TA for certifications or training?**
A4. No. CTAP is intended for off-duty voluntary education. TA does not pay professional certification fees, charges related to accrediting work or life experiences, or the following examination fees: Graduate Management Admissions Test (GMAT), Graduate Records Examination(GRE), Law School Admission Test (LSAT), Medical College Admissions Test (MCAT), Standard Achievement Test (SAT) or Admissions College Test (ACT).

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**Q5. If I receive other TA, may I request TA funding under the CTAP?**
A5. Per AFMAN 36-606, *Civilian Career Field Management and Force Development*, TA is not provided, in whole or in part, for courses for which the employee is receiving other federal or state tuition subsidies such as Veterans Administration educational benefits, scholarships or grants, etc. However, can be used in conjunction with student loans.

**Q6. What type of course(s) are appropriate to request TA funding?**
A6. Tuition Assistance (TA) is to be used for course(s) that contribute to occupational and institutional competencies, special interest needs, and readiness by supporting the current and future needs of the Air Force.

**Q7. Is TA taxable income?**
A7. Yes, employer-provided education assistance may be considered taxable income. For more information refer to https://www.irs.gov.

**Q8. How will administrative changes to CTAP affect me as a student?**
A8. AF civilians will be required to take a more proactive approach to submitting an education goal and TA requests via the Air Force Virtual Education Center (AFVEC). TA request must be submitted in a timely manner and the AF civilian must work closely with their academic institution counselor to ensure the courses they take are identified in their approved AFVEC education goal.

**Q9. What steps should I take to ensure my TA request is considered for funding?**
A9.
1. Register and log-in to AFVEC. It is very important that the personal data in the AFVEC education record profile is accurate.
2. Complete the CTAP Annual Virtual Benefits Training in AFVEC.
3. Ensure the current high school or degree level has been updated in AFVEC. If not, forward an unofficial transcript using the AFVEC message link. This must be completed before step four can be initiated.
4. Create an education Goal and submit an evaluated degree plan (provided by the academic institution) in AFVEC. The degree plan issued to the student must list the courses required to satisfy degree requirements and the completion status of each course.
5. Once the education Goal has been reviewed and approved by the appropriate CFT, proceed to submit a TA and/or CLEP/DSST exam Funding Request via AFVEC. Note: Step-by-step tutorials are available on AFVEC on how to create an education goal and submit a TA request.

**Q10. How do I know what CFT I am assigned to?**
A10. The Air Force career field you are assigned to can be found on your AFVEC profile page under Career Program, in the DCPDS/myBiz Civilian Career Report- Career Program Information, and on the myVector profile page.

**Q11. What if I register and pay for a course prior to receiving a TA funding request approval for that course?**
A11. Prior approval of a TA funding request must be received by the academic institution. If the AF civilian proceeds to take a course without approval, the AF civilian is fully responsible for the tuition. Payment made by the AF civilian for the tuition to the academic institution will not be reimbursed after the fact. The funding application window is 45-7 days before the class start date.

**Q12. Does my TA funding request need to go through my supervisor each time I request funding?**
A12. If the TA funding request is for CLEP/DSST, then no, your supervisor does not need to see these. If the TA funding request is for coursework, then yes, it must first flow to the supervisor for concurrence.

**Q13. How will I be notified if my TA funding request is approved or disapproved?**
A13: The member can check the status of their funding request in AFVEC. Additionally, upon approval of TA funding requests, students receive an auto-generated email notification.

**Q14: Do I need to send my TA funding request approval to my academic institution?**
A14. It will automatically display in the Academic Institution (AI) Portal for academic institutions to retrieve. However, some academic institutions may require the student send their TA approvals. The AF Force Form 1227 can be downloaded in AFVEC by clicking on Funding Requests and selecting the Print PDF link under the applicable course.

**Q15. What if there are any changes to the TA funding request once submitted?**
A15. If there are any changes to the TA funding request once submitted, it is the responsibility of the AF civilian to notify the appropriate CFT of those changes (i.e. attendance of a different course, withdrawals, changes in course tuition cost, etc.)

**Q16. Upon course completion, what am I responsible for as the student?**
A16. The student must verify in AFVEC that the grade has been posted. If the institution does not post the grade within 30 days following the course end date, send a student account grade report or an unofficial transcript to the appropriate CFT for update by using the AFVEC message link.

**Q17. What if I fail the course(s)?**
A17. The student will be required to reimburse the AF for the TA amount that was paid. In exceptional circumstances, reimbursement may be waived based on acceptable justification. Contact your CFT if you feel a waiver is justifiable.

**Q18. What if I fail a funded CLEP/DSST exam(s) or results are unreported?**
A18. If the AF civilian fails the approved CLEP/DSST exam or results are unreported, the AF civilian will not be authorized CLEP or DSST approval in the future for the same exam.

**Q19. How will administrative changes to CTAP affect me as a supervisor?**
A19. Supervisors will continue to be an integral part of CTAP. Supervisor involvement provides an opportunity for leaders to become more involved in the professional development of the AF civilian and provide an opportunity to mentor. Note: Step-by-step tutorials are available on AFVEC for supervisors.

**Q20. What if the information in the AFVEC education record is incorrect?**
A20. The information that is automatically populated is pulled from the Defense Civilian Personnel Data System (DCPDS). To correct this information, the AF civilian should contact their supervisor and/or the local civilian personnel office for procedures to correct DCPDS errors. Either students or respective CFTs can update information that is not automatically populated.

**Q21. I have a Juris Doctorate, am I authorized to apply for CTAP to pursue my PhD?**
A21. Per Civilian Personnel Policy a Juris Doctorate is considered a Master's Degree in hiring practices. To be consistent with our policy, we will consider a Juris Doctorate a Master's Degree level and an employee with a Juris Doctorate will have the option to create a goal and request Civilian Tuition Assistance for a PhD degree. This option will be visible after the Juris Doctorate is updated in AFVEC as stated in the answer to Q9.

**Q22.Can I request a waiver on the fiscal year cap?**
A22. No. The annual funding cap applies to courses that begin 1 Oct – 30 Sep. If you run out of funding, you must wait and register for a term that begins on or after 1 October of the next fiscal year. TA funds that go unused by 30 September cannot be rolled over and used for courses with start dates on or after 1 October of the following fiscal year.