

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2007

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SENATE DRS85033-LH-8A (09/18)

Short Title: Tuition Discount for Fire Science Programs. (Public)

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Sponsors: Senator Rand.

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Referred to:

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A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO PROVIDE A DISCOUNT IN TUITION FOR ANY STUDENT WHO ENROLLS IN A FIRE SCIENCE DEGREE PROGRAM AT ANY CONSTITUENT INSTITUTION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA OR THE NORTH CAROLINA COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

**SECTION 1.** Article 14 of Chapter 116 of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:

**"§ 116-143.10. Tuition of certain students enrolled in fire science programs.**

(a) Definitions. – The following definitions apply in this section:

(1) Constituent institution or institution. – Defined in G.S. 116-2.

(2) Discount tuition rate. – A sum equal to fifty percent (50%) of the in-state tuition rate charged by the constituent institution in which the person enrolls as an undergraduate student.

(3) Fire science baccalaureate degree program. – Any baccalaureate degree program with a fire science major or similar major that requires a majority of academic credits for the major in courses that focus on fire-related issues such as fire dynamics, firefighting, fire protection and safety, fire department management and other types of fire service administration, fire scene investigation and analysis, and human behavioral and psychological responses to fires. The requirements may include academic coursework, internships, and cooperative work experience.

(b) Discount Tuition Rate for Student Enrolled in Fire Science Baccalaureate Degree Program. – Notwithstanding G.S. 116-143.1, any person who is a legal resident of North Carolina, qualifies for admission into a constituent institution, and enrolls in the institution as a full-time undergraduate student in a baccalaureate degree program in

1 fire science shall be charged a discount tuition rate for the academic year. The discount  
2 shall be granted for each academic year that a student who majors in fire science takes  
3 coursework that counts as academic credit toward that major.

4 (c) Contractual Conditions of Discount Tuition Rate. – Any student receiving a  
5 discount tuition rate under this section shall enter into a legal agreement with the  
6 constituent institution or the State Education Assistance Authority as appropriate to  
7 accept employment in this State in the field of fire science for a period of two years. The  
8 terms of the contract shall address the following: the time period within which the  
9 student must satisfy the employment requirement set out by this subsection, the  
10 schedule and terms for repaying the discount plus interest in the event the student does  
11 not work in this State in the field of fire science, changes in a student's academic status  
12 and how those changes may affect the determination of whether a student is in breach of  
13 the contract including a student's transfer to another institution of higher education,  
14 delayed graduation, or failure to graduate, and any other terms deemed necessary or  
15 appropriate to administer the contract. The constituent institution or State Education  
16 Assistance Authority, as appropriate, may forgive or reduce any repayment of the  
17 discount if it finds that extenuating circumstances exist that would make repayment  
18 impossible.

19 (d) State Education Assistance Authority May Administer Discount Tuition Rate.  
20 – The State Education Assistance Authority may administer the functions regarding the  
21 discount tuition rate and the execution and enforcement of contract terms for a  
22 constituent institution if requested by the Board of Governors or a constituent institution  
23 to do so. The State Education Assistance Authority may also adopt rules as necessary to  
24 carry out its responsibilities under this section.

25 (e) Board of Governors to Adopt Policies Regarding Discount Tuition Rate. –  
26 The Board of Governors shall adopt any policies necessary to implement the provisions  
27 of this section.

28 (f) Legislative Intent: – Constituent Institution Shall Not Incur Revenue Loss as  
29 Result of Discount Tuition Rate. – It is the intent of the General Assembly that no  
30 constituent institution shall incur a loss in revenue by providing a discount tuition rate  
31 under this section; therefore, the General Assembly intends that the difference between  
32 the tuition rate and the discount tuition rate be funded by monies from the General  
33 Fund."

34 **SECTION 2.** Article 1 of Chapter 115D of the General Statutes is amended  
35 by adding a new section to read:

36 **"§115D-8.1. Tuition of certain students enrolled in fire science programs.**

37 (a) Definitions. – The following definitions apply in this section:

38 (1) Community college. – Defined in G.S. 115C-2(2).

39 (2) Discount tuition rate. – A sum equal to fifty percent (50%) of the  
40 in-State tuition rate.

41 (3) Fire science degree program. – Any program that leads to an associate  
42 degree in fire protection technology.

43 (b) Discount Tuition Rate for Student Enrolled in Fire Science Degree Program.  
44 – Notwithstanding any other provision of law, any person who is a legal resident of

1 North Carolina, qualifies for admission into a community college, and enrolls in the  
2 community college as a full-time undergraduate student in an associate degree program  
3 in fire science shall be charged a discount tuition rate for the academic year. The  
4 discount shall be granted for each academic year that a student takes coursework that  
5 counts as academic credit toward a degree in fire science.

6 (c) Contractual Conditions of Discount Tuition Rate. – Any student receiving a  
7 discount tuition rate under this section shall enter into a legal agreement with the  
8 Community Colleges System Office or the State Education Assistance Authority, as  
9 appropriate, to accept employment in this State in the field of fire science for a period of  
10 one year. The terms of the contract shall address the following: the time period within  
11 which the student must satisfy the employment requirement set out by this subsection,  
12 the schedule and terms for repaying the discount plus interest in the event the student  
13 does not work in this State in the field of fire science, changes in a student's academic  
14 status and how those changes may affect the determination of whether a student is in  
15 breach of the contract including a student's transfer to another institution of higher  
16 education, delayed graduation, or failure to graduate, and any other terms deemed  
17 necessary or appropriate to administer the contract. The Community Colleges System  
18 Office or State Education Assistance Authority, as appropriate, may forgive or reduce  
19 any repayment of the discount if it finds that extenuating circumstances exist that would  
20 make repayment impossible.

21 (d) State Education Assistance Authority May Administer Discount Tuition Rate.  
22 – The State Education Assistance Authority may administer the functions regarding the  
23 discount tuition rate and the execution and enforcement of contract terms for the  
24 Community Colleges System Office if requested by the State Board of Community  
25 Colleges to do so. The State Education Assistance Authority may also adopt rules as  
26 necessary to carry out its responsibilities under this section.

27 (e) State Board of Community Colleges to Adopt Policies Regarding Discount  
28 Tuition Rate. – The State Board of Community Colleges shall adopt any policies  
29 necessary to implement the provisions of this section.

30 (f) Legislative Intent: – Community Colleges Shall Not Incur Revenue Loss as  
31 Result of Discount Tuition Rate. – It is the intent of the General Assembly that no  
32 community college shall incur a loss in revenue by providing a discount tuition rate  
33 under this section; therefore, the General Assembly intends that the difference between  
34 the tuition rate and the discount tuition rate be funded by monies from the General  
35 Fund.

36 (g) Nothing in this section shall be construed to require volunteer firefighters to  
37 pay tuition for coursework taken toward a degree in fire protection technology."

38 **SECTION 3.** This act becomes effective July 1, 2007, and applies to the  
39 2007-2008 academic year and each subsequent academic year.