



## **Explanation of Graduate Fee Waiver and FAQs**

The University of Southern Indiana's (USI) College Achievement Program (CAP) offers a **Graduate Fee Waiver** to assist teachers with completion of a master's degree or acquisition of discipline-specific graduate-level coursework. The purpose is to help **current CAP instructors** meet the Higher Learning Commission's faculty credentialing expectations, as well as USI departmental criteria for adjunct and CAP instructors, by the HLC deadline of 9/1/2025. **Prospective CAP instructors** also can participate but do not have a particular deadline to complete their hours.

The Fee Waiver is applicable toward a lifetime maximum of 18 hours per person of approved, discipline-specific graduate coursework at USI. The Graduate Fee Waiver covers in-state tuition for USI graduate courses as well as assorted fees. The Waiver does not pay for books, the Graduate Studies application fee or costs for official transcripts as part of the Graduate Studies application process.

Candidates must teach in a high school that will commit to offering the USI CAP course for up to three years, once the instructor is approved for teaching by USI. The number of required years is based on the number of credit hours paid by the Graduate Fee Waiver: [3 credit hours = 1 year; 6-9 credit hours = 2 years; 12-18 credit hours = 3 years].

If graduate courses in a certain discipline are not available at USI, they may be taken at another institution, potentially through one of several grants (details vary), or at the teacher's expense. In order to assure outside courses or degrees will be counted toward CAP approval, teachers must contact the CAP Office prior to registration in non-USI graduate programs or courses. USI and CAP are not responsible for non-approved coursework failing to count toward CAP or adjunct faculty criteria at USI.

### **General Eligibility for Prospective CAP Instructors**

- At least three years of experience teaching in the discipline, preferably with at least one year of experience teaching an advanced or upper-level course in the discipline
- A master's degree in the discipline or sub-field, or a master's degree in a related area (like education) but with 18 graduate hours in the discipline or sub-field\*
- Completion of an online application, including an endorsement from the principal
- Review by the USI department chair and faculty liaison, including a transcript evaluation and classroom observation. Approval is granted by the chair, dean and Provost.

### **\*General Eligibility for Prospective CAP Instructors to Participate in the Graduate Fee Waiver**

- Completion of a CAP Instructor Pre-Application, including an endorsement from the principal, as well as unofficial transcripts
- Review of pre-application and transcripts by USI department chair and faculty liaison. Liaison will request a classroom observation.
- Graduate Fee Waiver approval is granted by the faculty liaison and chair.
- A second observation may be requested as candidate concludes degree and becomes eligible for full CAP approval.

	<b>Pursuing First Master's Degree (Prospective Instructor)</b>	<b>Completed Master's Degree; In Need of Graduate Hours in Content (Provisionally Approved Instructor)</b>	<b>Completed Master's Degree; In Need of Graduate Hours in Content (Current Instructor)</b>
<b>What is covered by the Graduate Fee Waiver?</b>	Tuition and fees toward a lifetime maximum of 18 graduate hours from USI; coursework must be in the discipline or sub-field	Tuition and fees toward a lifetime maximum of 18 graduate hours from USI; coursework must be in the discipline or sub-field	Tuition and fees toward a lifetime maximum of 18 graduate hours from USI; coursework must be in the discipline or sub-field
<b>What is not covered by the waiver?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tuition &amp; fees for remaining classes toward the master's degree</li> <li>• Graduate Studies application fee</li> <li>• Official transcript fees (required to apply to Graduate Studies)</li> <li>• Textbooks</li> <li>• Fines</li> <li>• Costs of graduate coursework taken outside USI</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Graduate Studies application fee</li> <li>• Official transcript fees (required to apply to Graduate Studies)</li> <li>• Textbooks</li> <li>• Fines</li> <li>• Costs of graduate coursework taken outside USI</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Graduate Studies application fee</li> <li>• Official transcript fees (required to apply to Graduate Studies)</li> <li>• Textbooks</li> <li>• Fines</li> <li>• Costs of graduate coursework taken outside USI</li> </ul>
<b>What paperwork does the CAP Office require?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CAP Instructor Pre-Application</li> <li>• Unofficial undergraduate and graduate transcripts, if not already on file with Graduate Studies. (Upon hiring, official transcripts will be required.)</li> <li>• A course outline or syllabus</li> <li>• Graduate Fee Waiver Application</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CAP Instructor Application</li> <li>• Unofficial undergraduate and graduate transcripts. (Upon completion of hours, official transcripts will be required.)</li> <li>• A course outline or syllabus</li> <li>• Graduate Fee Waiver Application</li> <li>• Professional Development Plan (PDP) outlining plan to complete hours by 9/1/2025.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Graduate Fee Waiver Application</li> </ul>
<b>What does USI Graduate Studies require?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online Application to Graduate Studies</li> <li>• Official transcripts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online Application to Graduate Studies as either degree-seeking or non-degree-seeking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online Application to Graduate Studies as either degree-seeking or non-degree-seeking</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Program admission; requirements vary</li> <li>• Maintain good standing in the program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Official transcripts</li> <li>• Program admission; requirements vary</li> <li>• Maintain good standing in the program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Official transcripts</li> <li>• Program admission; requirements vary</li> <li>• Maintain good standing in the program</li> </ul>
<b>Who decides and how?</b>	Approval to utilize the Fee Waiver comes from the USI department chair and/or faculty liaison, as well as the assistant director of lifelong learning. The USI department chair and/or faculty liaison reserve the right to make a classroom observation prior to approving an initial Graduate Fee Waiver application.	Approval to utilize the Fee Waiver comes from the USI department chair and/or faculty liaison, as well as the assistant director of lifelong learning. The USI department chair and/or faculty liaison reserve the right to make a classroom observation prior to approving an initial Graduate Fee Waiver application.	Approval to utilize the Fee Waiver comes from the USI department chair and/or faculty liaison, as well as the assistant director of lifelong learning.
<b>Can I teach before I've completed my coursework?</b>	No. The HLC requires that faculty teaching undergraduate courses have completed a master's degree. One is considered a <b>prospective instructor</b> until able to teach the course.	Yes. Mastered level instructors can teach CAP courses while pursuing hours in the content area, as long as there is a reasonable plan to complete the 18 hours by 9/1/2025. This is considered <b>provisional approval</b> .	Yes. <b>Current instructors</b> can continue teaching CAP courses while pursuing hours in the content area.

Certain situations do not qualify for use of the CAP Graduate Fee Waiver; review Section I, Eligibility, on the GFW Application (available upon request from the CAP Office).

**For more information, contact:**

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