

Student Accounts Processes & Procedures Manual

1. Introduction

The Student Accounts Office serves as the central collection center for student accounts receivables. The office is responsible for verifying that university billing, collection, and accounting procedures for student tuition, fees, and related charges are in compliance with federal and state statutes, as well as university policies. The Office of Student Accounts has a variety of financial responsibilities associated with compliance and customer service in the assessment, billing, collection, and refunding related to Tuition and Fees. This manual contains requirements related to the oversight and authority as they relate to university accounts receivable. Oversight of these functions primarily relates to assessment of charges, billing, payment acceptance, and collection of monies that are due to or belonging to The University and to The State of North Carolina. The Vice Chancellor of Finance and Operations and/or his/her delegates maintains authority in the enforcement of the university's accounts receivable plan to maintain compliance with state statute and other relevant regulations.

2. Scope

This manual applies to all persons employed by the State of North Carolina acting on behalf of Appalachian State University as well as all students (prior, current, or future) until such time as it is amended.

3. Annual review of Tuition & Fees

Each year, in the Fall term, a student-represented multi-disciplinary committee meets to review and make recommendations regarding the next academic year's tuition and fee rates (Fall 2023 meeting recommends rates beginning for Fall 2024). Upon review of requests, the committee makes a recommendation to the Chancellor regarding the next year's tuition and fees and any adjustments recommended. The Chancellor reviews these recommendations and directs rate requests to be sent to the University of North Carolina Board of Governors (UNC BOG). In a Spring meeting, the UNC BOG makes final determinations regarding rates at each institution for the upcoming academic year. Those rates, once approved, are required to be charged to students based on their approval. Some fees described as miscellaneous may be approved at the discretion of the Chancellor.

4. NC Statute for Institutions of Higher Education regarding Tuition & Fees.

4.1 NCGS 14 116-143 This statute, among other things direct UNC member institutions related to:

- **Discounting or Unfunded Scholarship Forbidden** -North Carolina General Statute - [Article 14 116-143](#) sets specific guidelines related to approval of tuition and fees. Additionally, section (c) prevents reduced rates or providing unfunded scholarships or discounting unless authorized by state statute.
- **Residency for tuition provisions** - See the registrar's webpage [NC Residency for Tuition](#) for details and further information on residency determination.
- **Fixed Tuition** - See [Fixed Tuition Guarantee Page](#) for more details.
- **Nonresident Tuition** - Unless provided otherwise by law, the UNC BOG shall fix the tuition and required fees charged nonresidents of North Carolina who attend the institutions enumerated in G.S. 116-4 at higher rates than the rates charged residents of North Carolina comparable to the rates charged nonresident students by other comparable public institutions nationwide...

4.2 Specific exceptions authorized by NC General Statute are available as shown below:

- [NCGS 115B-2](#) Law Enforcement (or other emergency worker defined in statute) - who dies or becomes permanently and totally disabled as a result of a traumatic injury sustained in the line of duty.
- [NCGS 115B-2.2](#) Senior Citizens Course Audit - Any person 65+ may audit courses without payment of registration fee or tuition. A person shall be allowed to audit a class under this section only on a space available basis.
** NCGS 115B-6 Misrepresentation of eligibility - Any applicant who willfully misrepresents his or her eligibility for the tuition benefits provided under this chapter, or any such person who knowingly aids or abets such applicant in misrepresenting his eligibility for such benefits, shall be deemed guilty of a Class 3 misdemeanor.
- [NCGS 116 143 \(d\)](#)"...the Board of Governors of the University of North Carolina may, in its discretion, provide regulations under which personnel may during the period of normal employment enroll in The University of North Carolina institutions free of charge for tuition and fees, provided such enrollment does not interfere with normal employment obligations and further provided that such enrollments are not counted for the purpose of receiving General Fund appropriations as follows:
 - Except as provided in subdivision (2) of this subsection, a full-time faculty member of the rank of full-time instructor or above and any full-time staff member of The University of North Carolina may enroll in not more than three courses per year.

- A full-time or part-time campus law enforcement officer may enroll in the number of courses per year determined by regulation.
- Please see specific Appalachian State guidance found at webpage "[Tuition Waivers and Tuition Reimbursement](#)".

5. Billing

5.1 Registered Student Billing

After bills have been generated, email notifications will be sent to student ASU email addresses and authorized user email addresses available in the New Billing and Payments Center by Touchnet. All new invoices will be viewable to students and users authorized via the authorized user function in the New Billing and Payments Center by Touchnet.

Via the AppalNet Self Service ([AppalNet Self Service link](#)): Log into AppalNet Self Service. Select the General Self Service box; select the Student Tab; select the Student Accounts link; then select the Billing and Payments Center by Touchnet.

Via the Authorized User login on Touchnet ([Authorized User login](#)): Login with the email address entered by the student for the authorized user as well as the Billing and Payments Center by Touchnet password. When authorized users are enabled, an email is received by the authorized user with a temporary password that must be changed upon login.

Please be aware that additional charges may be added after the bills are generated. Diploma and postage, library fines, parking and traffic fines, technology consumables, charges for textbooks not returned, dorm check-out charges, and so on, may not be on the billing statement. If they occur during the billing cycle, they will be due on the due date of the bill they appear on. If charges are added to the account after the last bill of the term (mid-term bill), they are payable when posted to the student's account.

Billing statements are in **summary form**. To view detailed account transactions and to make a payment, log into your Billing and Payments Center by Touchnet Portal.

5.2 Individuals not actively enrolled Billing

All students are expected to satisfy any amount owed by the last day of class in each term. Any balances after the last day of class are considered past due and the Office of Student Accounts will follow the NC Office of State Controllers Policy, NC OSC Policy 200.7, regarding past due balances. In addition, any balance on a student's account who withdraws from the university is considered past due.

Students who have left ASU and have outstanding balances on their Student Accounts Receivable account are mailed statements for two consecutive months. If there is no response to the statements a follow-up letter is sent. If there is still no response and the account is over \$50.00, it is referred to the State Attorney General. After the Attorney General's Office has exhausted collection efforts, the remaining account balance will be referred to a State contracted collection agency.

All non-student billing is billed on a net 30 basis and is past due 31 days after the first invoice. Likewise non-students who are past due are subject to the same collections processes described above.

5.3 Third Party Billing

Third party billing encompasses a variety of different billing related to students such as military benefits, state pre-paid programs and other scholarships and grants that require individual billing. Please contact thirdpartybilling@appstate.edu for assistance with a third-party bill.

6. Payment of Tuition and Fees

6.1 Course Cancellation for Non Payment

Payments of tuition and fees are made in a variety of ways. Payment for a term is due in advance of the start date of the term. Course registration cancellation for non payment occurs approximately one week before the first day of classes. All invoices are due upon receipt with schedule cancellation for non-payment to occur unless one of the following occur:

a) Balance is paid in full

b) Payment Plan - Student or authorized user enroll in payment plan and makes payments as agreed including required down payment. The terms of the payment plan can be found on the [Payment Plans Webpage](#).

c) Financial Aid - Student has sufficient financial aid or military related funding (or combination of financial aid and other payment made) to cover outstanding balance.

d) Payment Agreement - Student signs the payment agreement in Touchnet (must be student not authorized user) which agrees to the obligation and confirms that necessary funds have been secured but a timing issue necessitates the need for use of the agreement.

6.2 Common payment methods below:

6.2.1 Self-payment via cash or check

Returned payments - The university is assessed fees when a check or ACH (echeck) payment is returned. The university assesses a fee on all payments rejected for processing, including ACH payments. Check and ACH (echeck) payments that are returned for any reason are assessed a \$35 fee. It is the payor's responsibility to confirm with their bank that they accept electronic debits and confirm the routing and account number.

6.2.2 Self-payment via payment (debit/credit) card

Disputed payments - Payments made via debit or credit card to the student account that are disputed (including disputes for charging a convenience fee) will receive a hold that requires payment to be made via certified check. In addition, Fees charged to the University due to a disputed payment may be placed on the student account.

6.2.3 Payment via Student Financial Aid

A variety of types of Student Financial Aid is available to Appstate students. see www.financialaid.appstate.edu or a student financial aid counselor for more details regarding availability and eligibility.

6.2.4 Payment via third-party

Payments are often made via a third party. In some cases those third parties required separate billing to facilitate payment. Contact thirdpartybilling@appstate.edu for details.

7. Non Payment and Collection of Outstanding Balances

7.1 Students Currently Enrolled

*Students who are currently enrolled and have not paid in advance of the start of the term or set up a payment plan - paying as agreed are subject to supplemental billing with specifically outlined consequences for continued non-payment.

- Late Fees for Students enrolled in current term. Shortly after the end of the drop/add period as defined on the Office of the [Registrar's Academic Calendar](#), an updated invoice is sent. Failure to pay this invoice in full, may result in a \$100 late fee.
- Registration holds - In both Fall terms (in October) and Spring terms (in March) additional billing notifications are sent. Failure to pay this invoice in full, may result in a registration hold which prevents future registration.

7.2 Individuals (including former students) not actively enrolled in a term.

7.2.1 30 Day Notice/Billing

A 30 day past due bill is sent via email and via US Mail to the address provided by the student.

7.2.2 60 Days Past Due and No longer enrolled

A 60 day past due bill is sent via email and via US Mail to the address provided by the student.

7.2.3 90 Days Past Due and No longer enrolled

- A demand letter from the NC Attorney General is sent to the address provided by the student.
- A non-refundable 10% Late fee required by NCGS is applied to the account.
- As required by NCGS 147-86.23 Interest begins to accrue based on rates determined by The State of North Carolina

- Per NCGS § 105A-1 - Debt becomes subject to the Setoff Debt Collection Act (SODCA). NC tax refunds and lottery winnings are garnished.

7.2.3.4 90+ Days past Due and No longer enrolled

- Interest will continue to accrue indefinitely until paid in full
- Payment for obligation is pursued by a 3rd party collections agency.

7.3 Employees

- Employees of Appalachian State University may have a "student" account even though you are an employee that may have either student related charges or employee related charges such as library fines, overpayments and many other reasons. Appalachian State University, per Article 60 143-553 - Employees who owe the university money that is past due must make restitution of the amount owed as a condition of continuing employment.

8. Refunds

A credit balance occurs when either payments exceed allowable charges, charges are reduced (most often due to change in enrollment or dining/housing), or awards are credited to the account that require refund directly to the student.

8.1 When do refunds occur?

A credit balance occurs when either payments exceed allowable charges, charges are reduced (most often due to change in enrollment or dining/housing), or awards are credited to the account that require refund directly to the student. Every attempt is made to process refunds for credit balances in current terms twice per week. In some rare circumstances this may be reduced based on state requirements, availability of funds, or timing issues associated with the state banking calendar.

9. Taxes

A variety of payments to both students and non students have tax implications. Appalachian State University completes required IRS documents as required. Appalachian State University does not provide any information that could be confused with tax advice. Please consult a professional tax attorney, tax accountant, or other tax professional for tax advice.

9.1 IRS Form 1098T

9.1.1 IRS Form 1098T Summary

Each year, in January, the Appalachian State University Office of Student Accounts submits an IRS Form 1098(T) to the IRS as well as to each student who had reportable data for the 1098(T) for the prior year. The student is either sent a copy of the 1098(T) to the student's address via USPS or if the student opts-in to receive an online copy, it may be obtained via the the Touchnet Billing and Payment Portal accessible through the student's Appalnet login or for authorized users via the Authorized User login page. IRS form 1098Ts will be available by midnight on January 31st for the prior calendar year. An online version will be available via the Touchnet Billing and Payment Center log in for those who opt in.

9.1.2 Individual Tax Identification Number Requirement

Having an accurate SSN/ITIN on tax forms supports the tax deduction that a student or family may claim for qualified tuition and related expenses charged by and paid to Appalachian State University on both federal and state income tax returns. Failure to provide Appalachian State University with an SSN/ITIN may result in the student being fined \$50 from the IRS (not Appalachian State University) in accordance with [Internal Revenue Code Section 6723](#).

10. Family Education Rights Privacy Act (FERPA)

Appalachian State University endorses and seeks to comply with all provisions of the "Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974" (FERPA) and all pertinent regulations. FERPA provides eligible students certain rights with respect to their education records. A student is covered under FERPA when they reach age 18 OR begin attending a postsecondary institution regardless of age or type of student. Please see <https://registrar.appstate.edu/resources/ferpa-students> for more information.