ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISION	FINA Administration and Finance
POLICY NUMBER	FINA 4.06
POLICY TITLE	Refund of Academic Tuition and Fees
SCOPE OF POLICY	USC System
DATE OF REVISION	March 23, 2022
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Vice President for Finance and Chief Financial Officer
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE	University Finance – Bursar's Office

PURPOSE

This policy provides guidance circumstances where refunds are issued to a student for student's payment of tuition and fees.

DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS

Academic Year - The academic year begins with the fall term and ends with the summer term.

Full-time - Undergraduate: A student enrolled for 12 or more semester credits, or 12 or more quarter credits, or 24 or more contact hours a week each term. Graduate: A student enrolled for 9 or more semester credits, or 9 or more quarter credits, or a student involved in thesis or dissertation preparation that is considered full time by the institution. Doctor's degree - Professional practice - as defined by the institution.

Part-time - Undergraduate: A student enrolled for either less than 12 semester or quarter credits, or less than 24 contact hours a week each term. Graduate: A student enrolled for less than 9 semester or quarter credits.

POLICY STATEMENT

The University will refund a part of academic fees in certain cases:

A. Changes in a student's status, which may require a refund:

   1. Change in a full-time student's schedule which results in reclassification to part-time.

   2. Change in a part-time student's schedule which results in fewer credit hours.

B. Other situations which may require a refund:

   1. Course or courses dropped.

   2. Drop/Withdrawal from the University.

3. Cancellation of a class by the University.

PROCEDURES

A. Refund Requests

All requests for refunds must be received during the academic year for which the fees were paid. Refunds may be requested at any time during the academic year in which the applicable term occurs. The academic year begins with the fall term and ends with the summer term.

B. Determining the Refundable Percentage

Student refunds for tuition are calculated based on the student's liable hours after the student has dropped course(s) or withdrawn. Liable hours are calculated as the total hours for which a student is still registered plus the liable portion of the dropped/withdrawn course(s). The liable portion is computed by taking the number of dropped hours times the liability rate (which is 100 percent minus the refund percentage). The refund amount is determined to be the difference of the original assessment and the assessment based on the new liable hours. For students whose liable hours are 12 or above, no refunds are processed. Other academic fees are non-refundable after the 100 percent refund percentage. For students activated for full-time military service during an academic term, the University follows state law in Section 59-101-395. Any refund calculated will be applied to the student account.

C. Drop/Withdrawal Refund Policy

Standard refund procedures for dropping/withdrawal from the university:

All refunds will be based solely on the percentage of time (in days) between the first day of a part-of-term and the last day of a part-of-term. The percentage (in days) will include all Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays between the start and end dates of each part-of-term.
Exceptions to this rule will only be made by the Bursar's Office. In these instances, any change in the refund percentage would be moved out to the next closest business day.
Courses fewer than six days long, first day = 100% refund, remaining days = no refund.

1. 100 percent if the student's official drop/withdrawal calculation is within 6% of the enrollment period for which the student is liable.

2. 70 percent if the student's official withdrawal calculation is between the period specified in (1) or before the end of the 10 percent period of enrollment for which the student is liable.

3. 50 percent if the student's official withdrawal calculation is between the period specified in (2) or before the end of the 16 percent period of enrollment for which the student is liable.

4. 20 percent if the student's official withdrawal calculation is between the period specified in (3) or before the end of the 25 percent period of enrollment for which the student is liable.

D. Refund Schedules

Refund schedules are located under the important deadlines on the Registrar's website (http://registrar.sc.edu/). See the Schedule of Classes on the appropriate campus for refund schedules. Telephone numbers, office locations, and reference offices are different for each campus.

E. Return of Title IV Funds

1. Refunds Policy for Students Who Have Received Title IV Funds and Withdraw from The University.

Federal financial aid funds are awarded with the expectation that students will complete the entire period of enrollment. Students "earn" a percentage of the funds that are disbursed with each day of class attendance. When a student who has received federal aid funds (Title IV Funds) leaves school before the end of the semester or period of enrollment, federal regulations require the University of South Carolina to calculate the percentage and amount of "unearned" financial aid funds that must be returned. Once a student has completed more than 60 percent of the enrollment period, they are considered to have earned all funding received. This calculation may have the effect of requiring the student who withdraws before this time frame to repay funds that have already been disbursed to the student or credited towards their current account for tuition, fees, housing and/or meals. Students are encouraged to meet with a counselor in the Office of Student Affairs, or the appropriate office on their campus, prior to making the decision to withdraw from school.

2. Title IV Refund Distribution

a. For fully withdrawn students receiving federal and/or state funds, the refund will be governed by the current Federal Title IV refund policy. The Office of Student Financial Aid and Scholarships determines the amount of the funds that are distributed back to Title IV, HEA Programs or other Financial Aid sources. For students and their parents who have received student loans or other forms of financial aid, funds will be returned in the order prescribed by federal regulations. The institution must return the funds to the financial aid program other than College Work Study, up to the amount of assistance that the student received from those programs. Funds are to be distributed to the financial aid programs in the following order:

— Unsubsidized Federal Stafford
— Subsidized Federal Stafford
— Federal Perkins
— Federal PLUS Loan

— Federal Pell Grant
— Federal Supplemental Education Opportunity Grant
— Federal TEACH Grant
— Federal Iraq/Afghanistan Service Grant

b. Any remaining balance will first be used to repay any outstanding university charges and any subsequent balances will be refunded to the student/parent as soon as possible but no later than 14 days after the calculation.

c. Exit interviews are required before leaving the University of South Carolina for all students who withdraw and have received Stafford, Perkins or Federal Nursing/Health Professions Loans. Exit interviews can be completed at: http://www.sc.edu/financialaid/loan_counseling/default.html.

Questions regarding exit counseling should be referred to the appropriate campus Financial Aid and Scholarships Office.

F. Return of Unearned Military Tuition Assistance (TA) Funds

For fully withdrawn students receiving military TA funds, the university will return any unearned TA funds on a proportional basis through at least the 60% portion of the period for which funds were provided. TA funds are earned proportionally during an enrollment period, with unearned funds returned based upon when a student stops attending.

When a Service member stops attending due to military service obligation, the educational institution will work with the affected Service member to identify solutions that will not result in a student debt for the returned portion.

TA funds should be returned directly to the Military Service, not the Service member.

The TA return schedule is below.

8 Week Class Schedule

Withdrawal Week	Return
Before or during first 3 days	100.00%
End of Week 1	87.50%
End of Week 2	75.00%
End of Week 3	62.50%
End of Week 4	50.00%
End of Week 5	37.50% (60% course completion)
End of Week 6	0.00%

17 Week Class Schedule

Withdrawal Week	Return
Before or during first 7 days	100.00%
End of Week 2	88.04%

End of Week 3	82.05%
End of Week 4	76.07%
End of Week 5	70.09%
End of Week 6	64.10%
End of Week 7	58.12%
End of Week 8	52.14%
End of Week 9	46.15%
End of Week 10	40.17%
End of Week 11	34.19% (60% course completion)
End of Week 12	0.00%

G. Appeals Process

A process for appeals exists for students or parents who believe circumstances warrant exceptions from published policy. The student must be fully withdrawn from the University in order to apply for an appeal.

The Withdrawal Refund Appeals Committee for each campus reviews and acts on all appeals. Address appeals to your respective campus:

Withdrawal Refund Appeals Committee
(Columbia Campus Only)
Office of the Registrar
University of South Carolina
Columbia, SC 29208
803-777-5555

RELATED UNIVERSITY, STATE, AND FEDERAL POLICIES

State law in Section 59-101-395

HISTORY OF REVISIONS

DATE OF REVISION	REASON FOR REVISION
Jan 6, 1989	New
Aug 1, 2014	Policy revised to reflect change in student system refund processing, align drop and withdrawal schedules, and update summer information for one summer term. Policy designator changed due to reorganization to Administration and Finance.
September 24, 2020	Policy revised to reflect requirement for returning unearned military TA funds to Military Service program and to include force majeure language.
March 23, 2022	Policy revision corresponds to changes to federal requirements.