

24 - Financial Information

An administrative fee equal to five percent of the total fees charged for the semester or \$100, whichever is less, will be withheld from the refund after the 100 percent refund period.

A special refund schedule for summer school is outlined in the Summer Schedule published in early spring.

Refunds are computed from the date of official withdrawal from the University. No refunds are made for full-time students dropping courses and not withdrawing from the University, unless by dropping courses a student's enrollment status drops below 10 hours. Fees are refundable for part-time students officially dropping courses without withdrawing from the University according to the following schedule:

Changes in Enrollment Status (below 10 hours)

- 100% Withdrawal through late registration

- 50% Within 14 calendar days of the University's official first day of classes

Certain fees are non-refundable and are so noted. No refunds are allowed because of irregularity in attendance of classes. Refunds are held pending the settlement in full of all outstanding and current obligations payable to the University. Circumstances may warrant the assessment of a reinstatement fee for the purpose of academic reinstatement.

Appeal Process – An appeal process exists for students or parents who believe that individual circumstances warrant exceptions from published policy. Appeals must be submitted in writing to the University's Withdrawal Appeals Committee. Address appeals to the Withdrawal Appeals Committee, Office of the Registrar, Francis Marion University, PO Box 100547, Florence, SC 29502-0547.

Refund Request – All requests for refunds must be made during the academic year for which fees were paid. The academic year begins with the Summer II term and ends with the Summer I term.

Financial Impact of Complete Withdrawal – Students who receive Title IV Funds (Federal Pell Grant, Federal SEOG, Federal Perkins, Direct Loans, sub and unsub) and withdraw completely from the University are subject to the Return of Title IV Funds regulation. Students with funds from any of these programs "earn" their financial aid dollars while enrolled. If a student withdraws prior to completing 60 percent of a term, a pro-rated portion of the federal financial dollars must be considered "unearned" and returned to federal programs. Unearned financial aid dollars which have to be returned to the federal aid programs could cause students to owe the University a significant amount upon withdrawal.

In addition to the amount of federal aid that FMU must return, students who received financial aid for other educational costs including off-campus living expenses, may be required to repay a portion of those funds to the federal programs. Failure to return aid due to the federal aid programs will result in loss of eligibility for federal financial aid assistance.

Federal aid funds to be returned are distributed to the programs in the following order: Unsubsidized Direct Loan, Subsidized Direct Loan, Federal Perkins Loan, Federal PLUS Loan, Federal Pell Grant, Federal SEOG, and other Title IV programs.

Institutional Refund Distribution - The Financial Assistance Office returns funds according to the Return of Title IV Funds regulations. Once Title IV programs have been satisfied, the balance of the refund is distributed as follows: Institutional Scholarships, Institutional Waivers, Need-Based, Enhancement, LIFE, HOPE, Palmetto, and student.

Housing and Dining – The Housing and Dining Refund Policy is separate and apart from the Academic Refund Policy and follows different procedures than the Academic Refund Policy due to the unique business of providing food and housing services to students.

Students who withdraw from on-campus housing during the period between the authorized move-in date through 14 calendar days into the fall and spring semesters will receive a 90% refund of the housing fee, less the \$150 housing application reservation fees. The 90% refund period begins on the authorized move-in date and continues through 14 calendar days into the fall and spring semester. During this period, students with a mandatory meal plan who withdraw from the residence halls or move from the residence halls to the apartments will receive a 90% refund of the meal plan assessment. All other students who wish to change or withdraw from a voluntary meal plan during this period may request a refund by completing and submitting the Dining Services Refund Request form (available at the Ervin Dining Hall). This policy does not apply to any declining balance accounts.

After the 90% refund period, there is no guaranteed refund of housing and meal plan fees. However, appeals will be considered for situations such as marriage, activation for military service, or uniquely extenuating circumstances that occur during the term of the contract. Appeals must be made within the academic semester that the appeal is based upon and should be submitted as soon as possible after the change of status occurs. The decision of the Appeals Refund Committee is final.

All appeals require completion of the Housing and/or Dining Refunds - Appeal Form which must be submitted to the Director of Housing and/or the Director of Dining Services who will forward the request to the Housing and Dining Refund Committee. Students will be notified in writing of the committee's decision. The decision of the Housing and Dining Refund Committee is final.

A refund of funds placed on the FMU ID Card (debit account) may only be requested upon graduation or official withdrawal from the University. Requests should be submitted to the Accounting Office, Stokes Administration, Room 103. See the FMU ID Card Holder Agreement at www.fmarion.edu/about/fees for more information on the terms and use of the FMU ID card as a debit card.

Refund checks are held in the Cashier's Office for 10 days and then are forwarded to the student's permanent home address.

FEES WAIVED FOR SENIOR CITIZENS

South Carolina law authorizes state-supported colleges and universities to permit legal residents of South Carolina who are 60 years old or older to attend classes for credit or non-credit on a space available basis without the required payment of general University fees. While the application fee and general University fees are waived for these persons, all other fees must be paid.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

It is recognized that the costs of higher education are a significant addition to one's budget. The mission of the Financial Assistance Office is to provide access and retention opportunities for students choosing to pursue a course of study at FMU. This is met by (1) providing information services to prospective students and their families, (2) assisting students and their families in the financial assistance application process, (3) determining eligibility for assistance and making financial assistance awards, and (4) facilitating the timely delivery of financial assistance proceeds to students.

Student financial assistance programs are administered according to a nationally accepted policy that the student and his or her parents are responsible for the student's educational expenses. Therefore, eligibility for financial assistance will be based on a comparison of educational expenses for the period of attendance and what the student's family can reasonably be expected to contribute as determined by the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid).

General program descriptions and application information follow. More detailed information is available by visiting our website by going to "Financial Assistance" under "Quick Links" at www.fmarion.edu.