1. **Purpose:** The Cashier’s Office processes all refunds on student accounts that were generated as a result of a reduction in credit hours or from withdrawing in accordance with the published refund schedule. Any refund is calculated on a term by term basis and based on the effective date in the Banner system. On occasion, a request for a refund may be submitted after the end of the refund period, may be unusual and/or extreme or may be unresolvable at the appropriate level.

   Additionally, guidance for other student charges such as Tuition Surcharge and Late Payment Penalties have provisions for waiving the charges given specific, unique circumstances and/or based on “good cause”.

   The purpose of this Standard Operating Procedure is to establish a Tuition Refunds Appeals Committee, to define the committee’s membership, to define types of appeals that the committee will render decisions upon, and to define any limitations of the committee.

2. **Membership:** The committee is comprised of representation from the following university departments and/or divisions:
   a. Dean of Students Office
   b. Registrar’s Office
   c. Financial Aid Office
   d. Counseling Center
   e. Student Health Services
   f. Academic Advising
   g. Student Financial Services (Ex-Officio role)

   *Note:* Housing and Dining are not represented as those offices have a separate contractual appeals process for the refund of room and board charges.
3. **Meeting time:** Meetings are usually held on the third Thursday of each month. In extreme or unusual circumstances, the committee may agree to review an appeal via email.

4. **Decisions:** Decisions of the committee will be final and will be communicated to the student in writing (or via email) and will be disseminated internally as necessary and externally upon written request and in accordance with federal and state guidance related to release of student data.

5. **Outstanding student account balances:** Any refund that a student becomes entitled to shall first be applied to outstanding financial obligations owed to the university.

6. **Tuition and Fees:**
   a. **Submitting an appeal:** The Registrar’s Office is the publicized point of contact for initiating a formal appeal. There is no specific form for submitting an appeal: all appeals must be in writing and students are encouraged to include any and all documentation they believe to be relevant to the appeal. Appeals can be submitted in person or via email to cas@ecu.edu. All documents submitted for an appeal are retained in Banner Xtender for audit purposes. The Director of Student Financial Services or his/her designee maintains the minutes from each meeting, documenting the outcome of each appeal.

   b. **Limitations:**
      i. Requests for refunds submitted later than one year after the end of the semester/term for which the refund request is made will not be considered, regardless of reason(s) unless a retro withdrawal is approved by the Student Academic Appellate Committee - reference item E below, Refunds are generally not approved when withdrawal or reduction in course load is caused by:
         1. personal reason(s);
         2. ignorance of publicized rules and regulations;
         3. circumstances within the student's control, and/or;
         4. failure of student to fulfill responsibilities.

      ii. Remedial Math fees are generally not refundable as the remedial math class is taught under contractual arrangement with Pitt Community College. Any questions or concerns about this fee will be referred to the Division of Continuing Studies since that office administers the contract.

      iii. Special course fees are generally not refundable. However, in the case of unique or unusual circumstance, the academic unit responsible for administering the fee will be contacted by a committee representative to inquire about the possibility of refund. The decision to refund a special course fee ultimately rests with the academic unit.
c. **Refund Consideration:** In general, a refund of tuition and required fees for withdrawal or reduction in course load is approved if any of the following circumstances exist or if the request was caused by:

   i. **Death of student** – The death of a student during a semester or session in which no academic credit is received, the University will elect to refund 100% of the tuition and required fees paid for that particular semester or term and waive the $25 processing fee;

   ii. **Being called to active military duty or the reassignment to a new active duty station:** A student called to active military duty or who is active member of the armed forces and is transferred to a new permanent duty station preventing the student from completing the semester or term and receiving no academic credit, pending verification of orders, the University will elect to refund 100% of the tuition and required fees for that particular semester minus the $25.00 processing fee unless the tuition and fees are being paid by an outside government agency;

   iii. **Documented serious medical reasons:** The University may elect to limit the financial liability of a student who becomes unable to complete his/her course work and officially withdraws as a direct result of a serious medical condition, pending the submission and review of pertinent medical records and supporting documentation;

   iv. **Death or serious illness of immediate family (defined as mother, father, sister, brother, spouse, child, legal guardian or step relation):** Due to the death of, or due to the serious illness of an immediate family member necessitating the withdrawal of a student before academic credit is received, the University may elect to refund up to 100% of the tuition and required fees paid for that particular semester or term minus the $25 processing fee;

   v. **Verifiable circumstances completely beyond the student’s control that result in extreme or unusual hardship to the student (i.e. Catastrophic calamity; natural or otherwise):** Notwithstanding any other provisions for refund, on rare occasions, when a student has withdrawn or reduced course load due to unforeseen circumstances totally beyond the student’s control, under conditions in which denial of refund would cause unreasonable and extreme hardship, the University may elect to limit the financial liability of a student, provided that no academic credit is received.

   vi. **Substantive error on the part of the University:** Substantive error on the part of the University will be corrected and, if appropriate, refunded in a timely fashion. Any university penalty charges assessed as a result of the error(s) will be reversed.

d. **Notification of Appeal Determination:** Every student that files an appeal will be notified in writing of the outcome – either via email or by mailed letter.

e. **Retro-Withdrawals:** In those instances where nonattendance is verified and a retro-withdrawal is granted, or in those instances where the Student Academic Appellate
Committee grants a retro-withdrawal, tuition and fee charges will be adjusted in accordance with the University’s established refund processes.

7. **Tuition Surcharge:**
   a. **Submitting an appeal:** The Registrar Office is the publicized point of contact for initiating a waiver request. The Tuition Surcharge Waiver form must be completed and submitted along with any and all documentation relevant to the appeal and the specific basis selected for appeal. Waiver requests can be submitted in person or via email to cas@ecu.edu. All documents submitted for a waiver are retained for audit purposes by the Director of Student Financial Services or his/her designee, along with the minutes from each meeting, documenting the outcome of each waiver request.
   b. **Time Limitations:** Tuition Surcharge appeals must be filed within 30 business days of notification of the charge. The Cashier Office emails each student that has been assessed a surcharge and provides the student with the required tuition surcharge notice, information about the surcharge and guidance on initiating an appeal.
   c. **Tuition Surcharge Waiver Consideration:** State Statute and UNC GA guidance specifically define criteria for granting a waiver as follows:
      i. **Military Service Obligation** - shall mean the performance of duty on a voluntary or involuntary basis in connection with service in the Armed Forces, Reserves, or National Guard including, but not limited to; active duty, active duty for training, initial active duty for training, and inactive duty training.
      ii. **Serious Medical Debilitation** - shall mean an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition requiring; (a) inpatient care in a hospital, hospice, or residential medical care facility; or (b) continuing treatment by a health care provider; provided that such incapacity did not result from the student’s violation of University policy or the commission of a felony.
      iii. **Disability** - shall mean a mental or physical incapacity that causes the performance of the student’s academic commitments to become impossible or impractical; provided that such incapacity did not result from the student’s violation of University policy or the commission of a felony.
      iv. **Other Extraordinary Hardship** - shall mean hardship of any kind which, despite responsible handling, resulted in the substantial disruption or interruption of the student’s pursuit of a degree.
   d. **Notification of Appeal Determination:** Every Student that files an appeal will be notified in writing of the outcome (via email or mailed letter).

8. **Late Payment Penalty:**
   a. **Submitting an appeal:** The Cashier’s Office is the point of contact for requesting a waiver of the late payment penalty. The initial point of contact for this specific waiver is the Cashier’s Office as the penalty is assessed as a function of collection.
activity. There is no specific form for submitting a waiver request: all requests must be in writing and students are encouraged to include any and all documentation they believe to be relevant to the waiver request. Waiver requests can be submitted in person or via email to cashier@ecu.edu. All documents submitted for an appeal are retained in Banner Xtender for audit purposes. The Director of Student Financial Services or his/her designee maintains the minutes from each meeting, documenting the outcome of each appeal.

b. **Time Limitations:** There is not a time limitation on submitting a late payment penalty request as the collections process is on-going until the balance is paid in full. However, once any past due balance – including the late payment penalty is paid – no requests for waiving a late payment penalty will be accepted or considered.

c. **Late Payment Penalty Waiver Consideration:** State Statute allows for waiving the late payment penalty with good cause. Criteria similar to that of Tuition Surcharge waivers are applied in determining if good cause is shown as follows:
    i. Military Service Obligation;
    ii. Serious Health Debilitation;
    iii. Disability; or
    iv. Other Extraordinary Hardship.

d. **Notification of Appeal Determination:** Every Student that files a waiver request will be notified in writing of the outcome (via email or mailed letter).

Distribution:
   TRAC Committee Members
   Director Student Financial Services
   University Cashier
   University Registrar
   University Attorney

Revisions:
   May 2004 – Revised committee membership
   July 2010 – Included Tuition Surcharge - revised procedure statement to include surcharge specifics
   November 2011 – Included Late Payment Penalty - revised procedure statement to include late payment penalty specifics
   January 2012 – removed reference to refunds being unavailable once fifty percent of the term had expired
   June 23, 2016 – Updated wording for retaining supporting documentation