

BOARD OF REGENTS BRIEFING PAPER

HANDBOOK Temporary Suspension, Delinquent Accounts

BACKGROUND & POLICY CONTEXT OF ISSUE:

Under current policy (*Title 4, Chapter 17, Section 2*) a student or former student having a delinquent account receivable of \$100 or more or an overdue loan of any amount with a member institution of the NSHE shall not be permitted to register at any institution. In addition, the student or former student having a delinquent account receivable of \$100 or more or an overdue loan of any amount shall not be permitted to receive a transcript of academic record, a diploma, a certificate or report of semester grades.

Due to the financial hardships many students are facing related to COVID-19 measures, the Chancellor and NSHE Council of President (COP) requests that the Board suspend these provisions through September 30, 2020, for student account balances accrued due to enrollment in courses offered during the spring or summer 2020 academic terms. This will allow students facing financial hardship to register for the summer and fall terms. Students with and without outstanding balances from spring or summer 2020 who register for the fall 2020 semester will be required to pay the balance for their fall courses or have a payment plan in place by the beginning of the semester.

SPECIFIC ACTIONS BEING RECOMMENDED OR REQUESTED:

Temporarily suspend the provisions of *Title 4, Chapter 17, Section 2*, subsections 1 and 2 as specifically stated above, so that students facing financial hardship are able to register for future semesters and obtain transcripts and other academic records through September 30, 2020. The provision in subsection 2 allowing a student with a delinquent account the ability to inspect the records under the provisions of the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) 20 U.S.C. § 1232(g), 34 CFR Part 99 would remain in place.

IMPETUS (WHY NOW?):

Students are facing unprecedented financial hardship due to COVID-19 measures such as the closing of many workplaces.

CHECK THE NSHE STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL THAT IS SUPPORTED BY THIS REQUEST:

- Access (Increase participation in post-secondary education)
- Success (Increase student success)
- Close the Achievement Gap (Close the achievement gap among underserved student populations)
- Workforce (Collaboratively address the challenges of the workforce and industry education needs of Nevada)
- Research (Co-develop solutions to the critical issues facing 21st century Nevada and raise the overall research profile)
- Not Applicable to NSHE Strategic Plan Goals

INDICATE HOW THE PROPOSAL SUPPORTS THE SPECIFIC STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL

The proposed suspension of these specified provisions in Board policy will allow students to continue without a break in their education even though they may have delinquent account balances. Such action will ensure students are continuing to access higher education and temporarily allay the financial pressures experienced by students, particularly those from low-income backgrounds. Further, removing possible delays for students in completing their educational goals means that students will progress from their studies into the workforce in a more timely manner.

BULLET POINTS TO SUPPORT REQUEST/RECOMMENDATION:

- COVID-19 measures have created extraordinary financial hardships for many students that are beyond their control.
- Without the proposed suspension of policy, the number of students unable to enroll in subsequent semesters due to a delinquent account would increase; this would likely result in an enrollment decrease across all NSHE institutions.
- Without the proposed suspension of policy, student completions would likely decrease.
- Students unable to obtain their transcripts or diplomas may be delayed in becoming licensed in their chosen profession and/or entering the workforce in the area they are training.

POTENTIAL ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE REQUEST/RECOMMENDATION:

- None have been presented.

ALTERNATIVE(S) TO WHAT IS BEING REQUESTED/RECOMMENDED:

Leave the policy in place and prevent students with delinquent accounts or overdue loan payments from enrolling in subsequent semesters or obtaining transcripts or other academic documents.

RECOMMENDATION FROM THE CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE:

The Chancellor's Office recommends supporting the temporary suspension of the policy to support students facing financial hardship.

COMPLIANCE WITH BOARD POLICY:

- Consistent With Current Board Policy: Title # _____ Chapter # _____ Section # _____
- Amends Current Board Policy: Title # _____ Chapter # _____ Section # _____
- Amends Current Procedures & Guidelines Manual: Chapter # _____ Section # _____
- Other: temporarily suspends the provisions of *Title 4, Chapter 17, Section 2*
- Fiscal Impact: Yes X No _____

Explain: Although it is impossible to estimate the amount, it is possible that the amount of receivable will increase for the campuses during the period the delinquent policy is proposed to be suspended.

POLICY PROPOSAL
Title 4, Chapter 17, Section 2
Delinquent Accounts

Additions appear in *boldface italics*; deletions are [~~stricken~~ and bracketed]

Section 2. Delinquent Accounts

The provisions of this section are temporarily suspended from April 7, 2020, through September 30, 2020.

1. A student or former student having a delinquent accounts receivable of \$100.00 or more, or an overdue loan of any amount with any member institution of the NSHE shall not be permitted to register at any institution. For the purposes of this Section, “delinquent accounts receivable” is defined to include tuition and registration fees, student fees, special courses fees and residence life charges billed to a student’s account in the student information system. An NSHE institution may include other fee categories as they deem appropriate in determination of a delinquent account.
2. A student or former student having a delinquent account receivable or an overdue loan of any amount with any member institution of the NSHE shall not be permitted to receive a transcript of academic record, a diploma, a certificate or report of semester grades. The student or former student may; however, inspect the records under the provisions of the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) 20 U.S.C. § 1232(g), 34 CFR Part 99.
3. In addition, institutions may refer delinquent accounts receivable of \$100.00 or more and overdue loans of any amount to a collection agency following written notification to the student or former student.
4. Institutions must publish on their institutional website the NSHE delinquent accounts policy, including a list of the fee categories that are applicable to the designation of a delinquent student account. This student notification must indicate that a student with a delinquent account shall not be permitted to register at any NSHE institution.