

TOPIC: POLICY REVISIONS TO THE *TUITION & FEES POLICY*

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I. SUMMARY

The following agenda item is a late item, responding to the Governor's request to higher education to ensure that the status of reservists who are called to duty will not be affected. Two years ago, students fighting fires were offered similar protection. While the institutions have demonstrated their ability to work with students on a case-by-case basis during such situations, students may not be aware that they are entitled to special accommodations, particularly when the student's departure date may not allow sufficient time to notify the institution. The proposed revisions to CCHE's Tuition and Fees Policy, provides students who are called to duty general assurances that their college enrollment status will not be adversely affected. Each institution will align its policies to CCHE's policy.

In summary, the proposed addendum requires that each public institution modify their policies to explicitly recognize that normal refund and withdrawal policies may not be appropriate and make provisions for individuals who leave the institution mid-semester to respond to a state or national emergency, including:

- Exempting students who are called to duty from normal withdrawal deadlines and permitting full tuition refund if a student's enrollment is interrupted mid-semester.
- Waiving fees from breaking a room and board contract and permitting refunds of pre-paid room and board charges.
- Modifying grading policies to give students reasonable options.
- Permitting institutions to include students called to service in the semester's student enrollment report.

CCHE staff is consulting with the governing boards to simplify the existing Tuition And Fees Policy. The policy revisions will return for Commission action at a later date. In the interim, staff recommend that the Commission approved the proposed addendum to CCHE's Tuition & Fees Policy.

II. STAFF ANALYSIS

The following language is proposed as an addendum to CCHE Tuition & Fees Policy

In times of emergency, certain students (e.g., reserve military units, individuals with specialized skills, or firefighters) are called to provide services to the country. When the call for service or national emergency is issued, it is often necessary for students to interrupt their coursework in mid-semester without advance notice.

Public two-year and four-year institutions' policies should explicitly recognize that normal refund and withdrawal policies may not be appropriate and make provisions for individuals who leave the institution mid-semester to respond to a state or national emergency, including:

- 1. Institutions' tuition policies should permit reimbursement for tuition paid by reservists called to active status during times of national emergency.**
- 2. Institutions may offer these individuals the option of crediting the current term's tuition to a future semester's tuition charges.**
- 3. Institutions shall waive any fee for breaking the room and board contract for reservists who are called to active status during a national or state emergency. In addition, an institution shall refund any fees paid for room and board based on the date that the individual left the residence hall.**
- 4. Institutions shall adopt policy language that ensures that individuals who are unable to complete a course due to a call to active status under a state or national emergency have a choice either to withdraw from the course without a grade or receive an incomplete with an opportunity to complete the course work at a later time.**
- 5. The refund and grading policies should recognize that normal withdrawal procedures may not apply in this situation, e.g., withdrawal timetables.**

Institutions will not be penalized financially by the general fund for interrupted enrollment and will be allowed to include in-state students who are called to active duty in the FTE report during the semester they are called to active duty.

III. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

That the Commission approve the proposed amendment to CCHE's *Tuition And Fees Policy*, effective immediately.